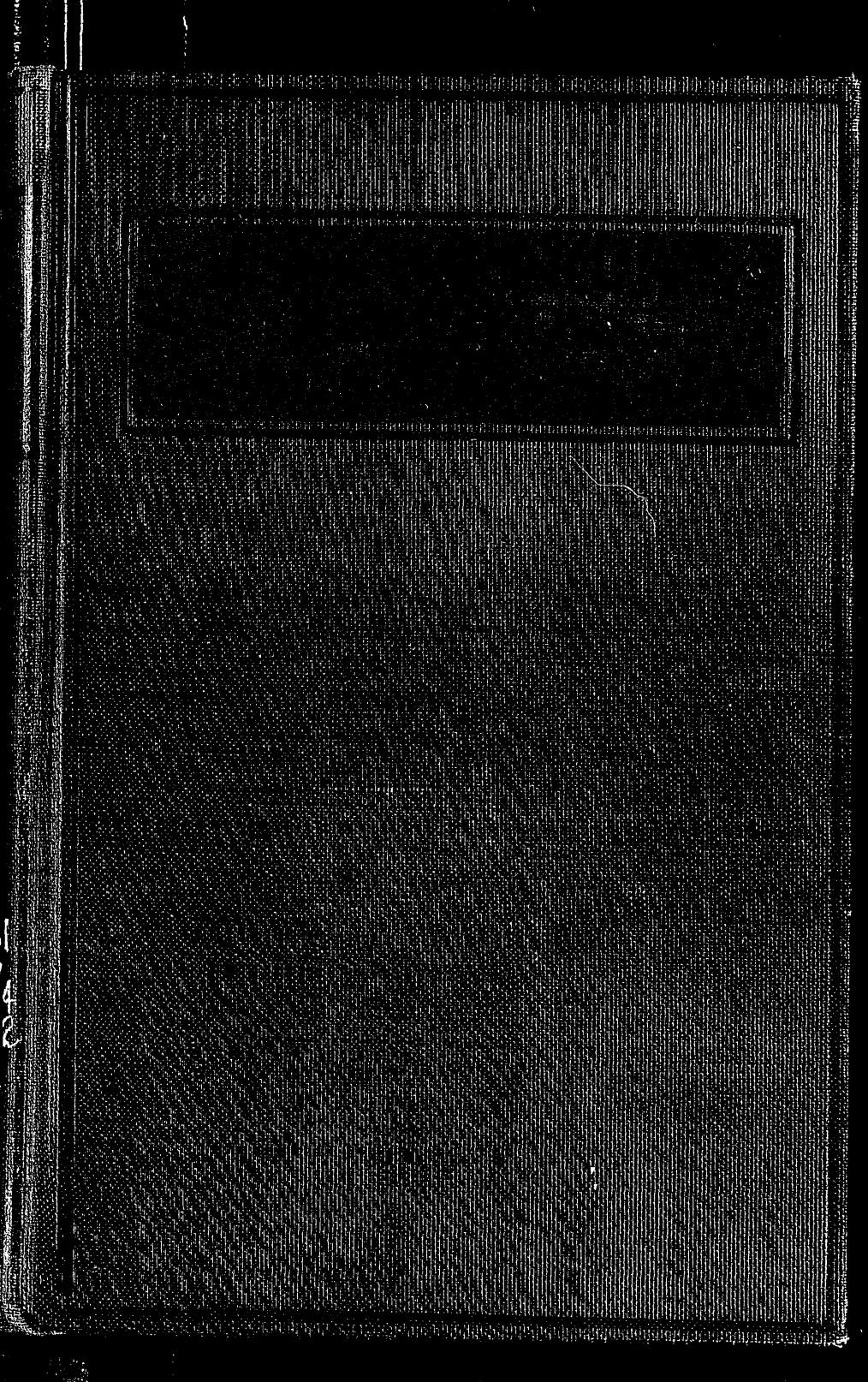

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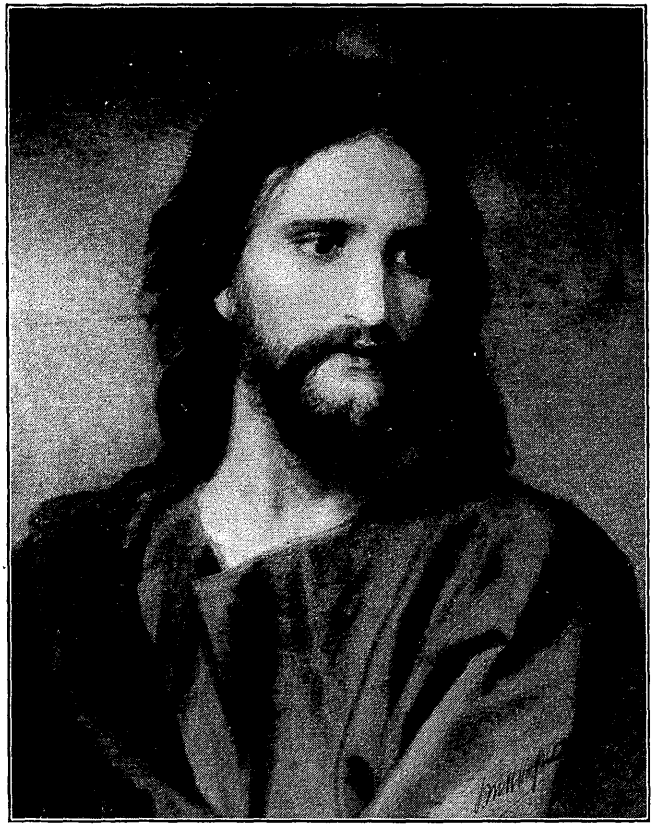

Artist, Hofmann

FROM "JESUS AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER"

The Abingdon Religious Education Texts
John W. Langdale, General Editor
WEEK-DAY SCHOOL SERIES GEORGE HERBERT BETTS, Editor

JESUS AMONG HIS NEIGHBORS

By
MARION O. HAWTHORNE

THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK CINCINNATI CHICAGO

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To
ISMAR J. PERITZ
Through Whom I Came To Know
JESUS OF GALILEE

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CHAPTER I

BON VOYAGE

WOULD you like to go with me on an imaginary journey to a land far, far away in an obscure part of the world? First of all, you want to know just where we are going, so look at your map, as we trace our course. You will need a map of the world for this. Find first our own continent of North America and then the United States and the State in which you live. Unless your map is quite large you will not be able to locate your city or town, but you can surely find its general location.

From this point trace your most direct route to New York City, the port from which we shall sail. We shall cross the Atlantic Ocean, landing either at Liverpool, in England, if we care to stop there for a few days, or at Cherbourg, in France, if we are in a hurry to reach our destination. From Liverpool or Cherbourg we may take a boat down the west coast of France and Spain, passing through the Strait of Gibraltar to the Mediterranean, or we may go by aeroplane from London to Paris and by rail from Paris to Marseilles or Naples, both ports on the Mediterranean. We would enjoy either of these routes very much, for we would be traveling through many beautiful and very interesting places. But nothing could possibly be more wonderful than our sail through the Mediterranean with its deep-blue waters, its arched sky above, and especially its indescribable sunsets.

We shall probably touch the northern coast of Africa, pass by many famous and interesting islands, skirt the coast of Italy, cruise around the Balkan Peninsula, and get a glimpse of Greece and Turkey. We would enjoy visiting London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Athens, Constantinople and Smyrna, but we shall have to reserve this pleasure for another journey, for we are bound now for one of the most interesting places in the whole world.

Leaving Constantinople to the north, we cruise around the western coast of Asia Minor through many, many islands that dot the famous old Ægean Sea, until we find ourselves again back on the Mediterranean steaming along the shore of Palestine to Joffa—or Joppa, as the ancient Greeks called it, the seaport of Palestine, the land of our destination. We shall remain in Joffa only long enough to get a train for Haifa or Jerusalem or Damascus, where we can charter a motor car for the rest of our trip through this famous country.

Are you surprised that we shall be able to travel comfortably in trains in this old, old part of the world? For you will find here a well-built and equipped railroad connecting all the important cities from Cairo through Palestine to Constantinople, a part of the great Berlin-to-Bagdad Railway System. And automobiles? When you see the Fords, Packards, Chevrolets, and Buicks that line the main streets of the cities and villages and traverse the highways, you might easily imagine that you are back in your own home town. You need not be surprised to hear the bur-r-r of an aeroplane, for it is not an uncommon sight to see

army and commercial planes flying through the clouds. But do not be misled. These modern methods of travel are not used to any extent by the natives, who still rely chiefly on the slow-moving donkey or on the majestic "ship of the desert," the camel.

For You to Do:

1. How would you plan a trip from your home to Palestine? Look up in an atlas the distance from your home to the seaport, Joffa. Look in your magazines or in your daily papers for advertisements of travel service offered by steamship companies and travel bureaus. Send for their literature, and then plan a trip from your home to Palestine, being sure that you know just how long the journey will take, how much it will cost, the places that you are to visit and the important things that you want to see.
2. Consult your geography, your *Book of Knowledge* or your encyclopedia for any interesting information you can find concerning the land of Palestine: its location, climate, industries, and government. Chapter II will throw some light on this question.

A Prayer

O God, we thank thee for this chance to study about the life of Jesus. We pray that we may come to know him better as we learn about the places where he lived and worked, as we read and hear stories of how he helped his neighbors and friends to know thee better. Help us, O God, to learn to follow Jesus' example of being kind and friendly, generous and helpful. Amen.

CHAPTER II

THE LAND WHERE JESUS LIVED

HERE we are in Palestine, hundreds and even thousands of miles from our homes. Throngs of other visitors are here too, pilgrims of every race and from all parts of the world. They have come, as we have, to visit the scenes made memorable and sacred by the great biblical heroes—Moses, David, Solomon, Paul, Jesus, and many others. Many of them are especially interested, as we are, in the scenes of Jesus' life and works, and they have come to re-live with him the experiences of his life: his boyhood in Nazareth, his ministry to the needy in the towns around the Sea of Galilee, his last days in Jerusalem.

The geography of Palestine.—Palestine is really a very small country, no larger than the State of New Jersey, about one hundred and ten miles long and forty miles wide. To the north lie Turkey and Mesopotamia; to the east, Arabia; and to the south and southwest, the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, and Egypt. As we have already discovered, the Mediterranean Sea borders Palestine on the west, while the Jordan River marks its eastern boundary. A very small country, indeed, and with a very great and important history!

All the biblical stories found in both the Old Testament and the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, took place within a territory not much

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RAILWAYS OF THE NEAR EAST

larger than Yellowstone Park. A traveler in Palestine may stand on one of the highest mountain peaks there and see where every important biblical event, with the exception of Paul's missionary journeys, took place.

As we sail along the coast we notice that it is low and straight, with no good harbors, though, in addition to Joffa, where we land, we shall see Haifa and Acre, small seaports. From these places lighters, little bigger than an ordinary rowboat, carry passengers and freight to and from the large steamers.

"Palestine is a land of narrow plains, picturesque mountains, rugged plateaus, and deep valleys. It has wide variations of climate and soil. The scene shifts continually as the traveler goes here and there within its narrow boundaries. California is the only region in our own country that has such a variety of scenery as that found in the Holy Land. The land rises to a height of about one and three-fourths miles on Mount Hermon, and sinks to 1,300 feet below sea level on the shores of the Dead Sea, which is the greatest depression on the lands of the earth. The climate presents all the phases from the climatic conditions of Arizona to those of Labrador. The country yields a greater variety of food products than any other region of its size in the world." [1]

Occupations: farming.—Such a variety in topography would naturally result in a variety of occupations and living conditions. This is true to some extent in Palestine, for we find that agriculture is the chief occupation in the fertile valleys and herding in the hill country, though vineyards and olive orchards

[1] *Geography of Bible Lands*, by Rena L. Crosby, p. 122, Used by permission of the publishers, The Abingdon Press, New York.

are found on the sloping hills. The dryness of the entire country is one of the great hindrances to successful farming, for Palestine has a long rainless summer of seven months during which the streams dry up, the grass withers, and the roads become full of dust and flies. But when the rain comes, it falls in torrents, accompanied by terrific thunder and lightning.

If the people did not make careful preparation for the rainy season, they would probably suffer

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THRESHING FLOOR, PALESTINE

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THRESHING FLOOR, PALESTINE

greatly. Before the deluge is expected roofs are mended, walls are re-enforced, cisterns are cleaned and repaired and agricultural implements made ready, for as soon as the soil has been softened sufficiently by the rain the farmer goes forth to plow and sow.

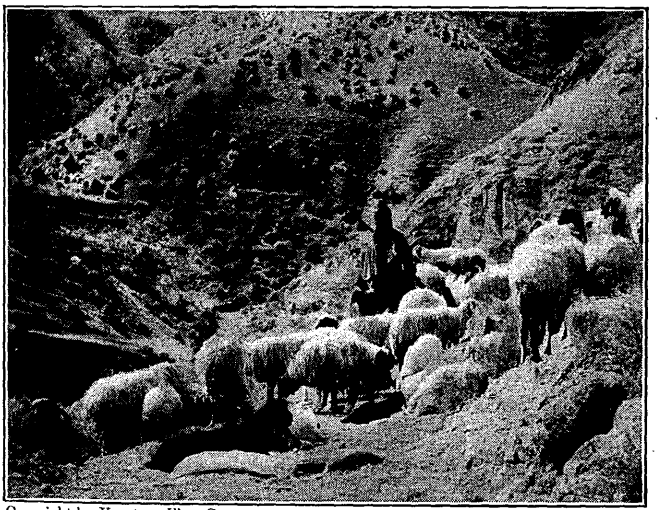
His methods seem very strange and old-fashioned to us, as first of all he scatters the seeds on the ground,

PLOWING IN THE HOLY LAND

then plows them under. (A few, however, plow first, then sow.) His plow is a huge, handmade affair drawn by oxen. Very little cultivating is done, as by the modern American farmer. The seeds sprout, grow rapidly and then comes the harvest, with the entire absence of our great tractors or harvesting and threshing machines. Planting is done by hand, as is harvesting, and even threshing. If proper methods could be used in Palestine, greater crops could be produced, but as it is now, many a

county in Iowa or Illinois raises each year more grain than is produced in the entire country of Palestine.

We are impressed, even so, with the beauty of Palestine: Fields covered with growing wheat or barley, byways adorned with beautiful wild flowers, hillsides affording pasture for sheep and goats, gentle slopes clustered with olive orchards and vineyards, are a fascinating setting for some of the Bible's most beautiful poetry and stories. It was here that Jesus lived, and we can imagine him stopping by the roadside entranced by the beauty of the wild flowers all about him, and saying, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil



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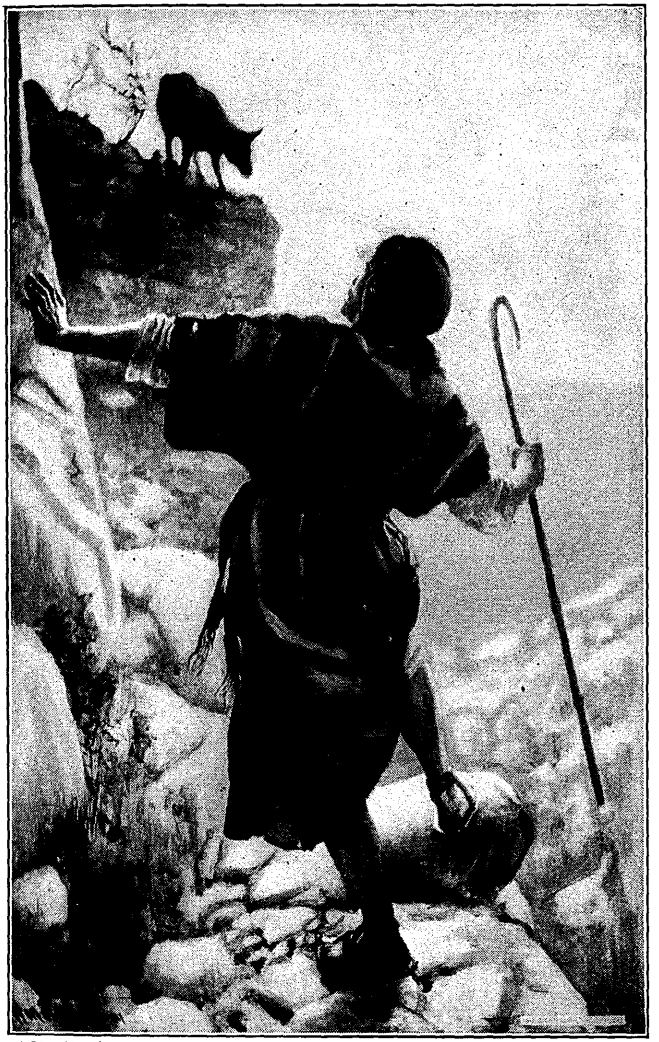
SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK IN THE MOUNTAINS OF JUDÆA, PALESTINE

not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matthew 6. 28b, 29).

Grazing.—The hilly, stony sections of Palestine make grazing one of the country's chief industries. Flocks of sheep and goats may be seen in all parts of the country, and from this background of shepherd life Jesus told his story of the good shepherd who endangered his own life and traveled through difficult and hazardous places to find his sheep that was lost. And in the Old Testament we find, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul" (Psalms 23. 1–3). In another place we read a beautiful verse that Jesus must certainly have known, "He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and will gently lead those that have their young" (Isaiah 40.11).

Other Occupations.—Palestine is more than plains and fields, mountains and rivers. In Jesus' day it had many thriving and busy towns and cities where various occupations were carried on. Fishing was the chief business around the Sea of Galilee and whole towns could be found populated entirely by fishermen. All kinds of fish were caught in the lake, and they were salted or pickled, and sold throughout Palestine. Their fame spread even to Rome, and we are told that they were often served on the emperor's table.

Around the Dead Sea were to be found many minerals—salt, bitumen, and phosphorus. From the henna flower a dye was made and used by



(c) Harold Copping, 1914

THE LOST SHEEP

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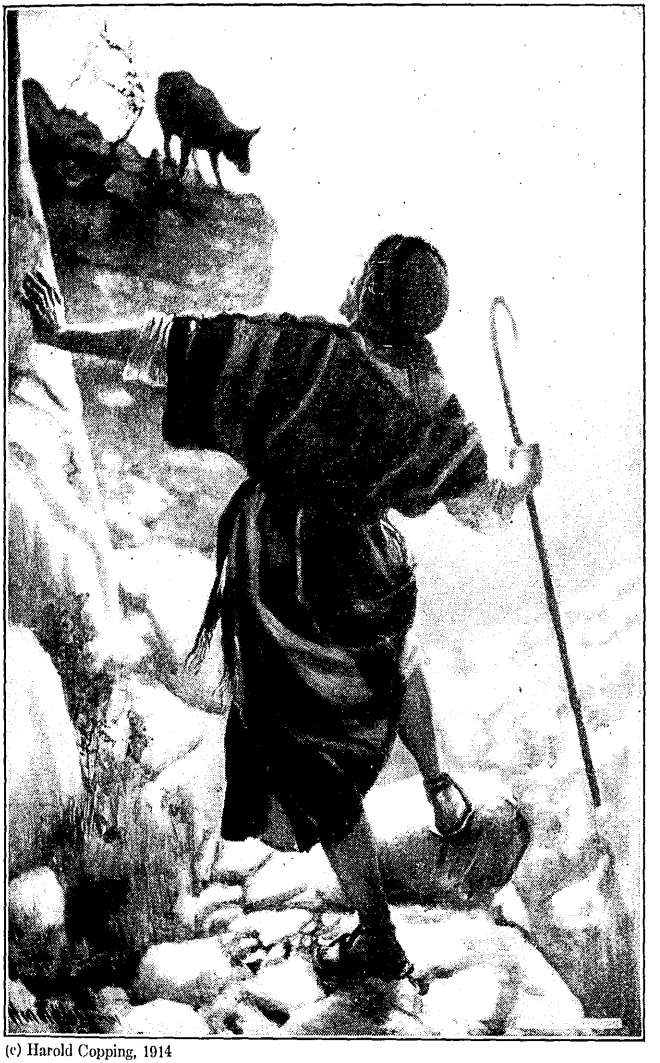


(c) Harold Copping, 1914

THE LOST SHEEP

women in their toilet. Whole gardens were devoted to the raising of rare and beautiful roses, from which a famous perfume called "attar of roses" was made.

The Jews early became famous for their handicraft and for their skill in trading. No less than forty different kinds of craftsmen were known in Jesus' time: tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, masons, millers, bakers, tanners, druggists, merchants, barbers, hairdressers, physicians, jewelers, carpetmakers, platemakers, painters, engravers, and many others. The streets of the towns and cities were named for the kind of business that was carried on in that street—silversmith street, fish-market street, and apothecary street. It was quite common for the workmen to wear some symbol of their craft so that they could be recognized in public. The money-changer wore coins in his ear, and the tailor a piece of cloth sewed to his garment.

Trades were passed on from father to son, which accounts for the fact that Jesus learned to be a carpenter with his father, Joseph. This happened to be one occupation which was not highly respected. Carpenters were seldom, if ever, paid for their work and it is very likely that Jesus' family often felt the pinch of hunger and want. In those days the carpenter's work was little more than making or mending plows and ox-bows, fixing fences and woodcarving. Only a few simple tools were used—saw, plane, mallet, two or three chisels and a drill. The carpenter used no bench, but sat on the ground to do his work. When necessary he could put his work between his feet, and have both hands free to work with.

For You to Do:

1. Look up in your *Book of Knowledge*, or in some encyclopedia the kinds of farming tools used in Palestine now.
2. Find on the map,
   Joppa.
   Jordan River.
   Sea of Galilee.
   Nazareth.
3. How does the climate in your section of the United States differ from the climate of Palestine? What differences are there in farming methods? in kinds of crops raised? in occupations?

CHAPTER III

JESUS' HOME IN NAZARETH

"O Son of man, thou madest known,
Through quiet work in shop and home
The sacredness of common things
The chance of life that each day brings.

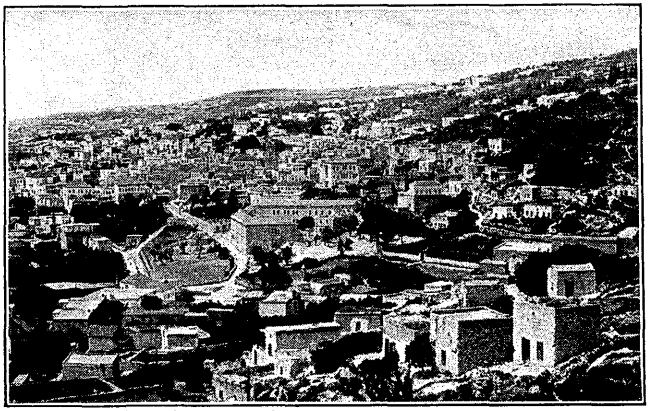
"O Workman true, may we fulfill
In daily life thy Father's will;
In duty's call, thy call we hear
To fuller life, through work sincere."[1]

THE first thirty years of Jesus' life were spent in and about Nazareth, a thriving and busy city in the province of Galilee. Its houses were built close together, and its streets were narrow and winding, swarming with people and animals, for during the day all activities were carried on in the out-of-doors. Many people, especially the aristocrats of Jerusalem, did not think well of Nazareth, for when they heard that Jesus came from there, they raised their eyebrows, curled their lips, and then asked, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" In much the same spirit we sometimes ask, "Can any good come out of the slums?"

The Sea of Galilee.—"Jehovah hath created many lakes, but the Sea of Galilee is his delight," said the Hebrew teachers about this beautiful body of water not far from Nazareth. The traveler can

[1] From *Hymnal for American Youth.* Reprinted by permission of The Century Co.

well believe this as he gazes on the quiet sea, and looks about him at the cliffs that surround the shore, and at the snow-capped top of Mount Hermon in the distance. He can close his eyes and imagine what this place must have been like nineteen hundred years ago, for then nine prosperous towns, separated only by well-tilled gardens and farms and



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NAZARETH, THE HOME OF JESUS, PALESTINE

by thickly wooded slopes, clustered about this lake. Many fleets of fishing vessels could be seen sailing on the blue waters, and groups of busy men could be found there plying the trades of that ancient day—boat-building, net-making, fishing, and fish-drying.

In this neighborhood Jesus lived and worked, and from towns around the Sea of Galilee he chose most of his disciples—rugged and fearless men who were undaunted by hard work or danger. Simon, James, John, and Matthew, also Andrew, Simon's brother,

were Galilæans. Philip came from Bethsaida, a small fishing village outside the province of Galilee. Bartholomew came from Cana, not far from Nazareth. James and Jude came from Capernaum, the city that became Jesus' home after he left Nazareth.

How the houses were built.—What kind of a house do you live in? What part of it do you like best? What makes it so comfortable and attractive to you? There is probably no country in the world that spends so much thought and money in building comfortable homes and in providing attractive and useful furniture as does our own. We can hardly imagine that people anywhere could actually live in such barren and unpleasant places as the homes in Nazareth in Jesus' day. What were they like? Let us find out.

The first thing we discover is that the homes of the common people were built of clay. Imagine living in a mud house—just one room with four thick walls and an opening for a door, and with possibly another opening for a window! The roof was made of dried grass, broom, or reeds overlaid with mud, and finally with lime or cement to make it waterproof. Much walked-over-mud or clay was the only floor to be found, except in the better homes, where stones or rough-hewn boards were used. It goes without saying that these houses were cold, damp, and ill-ventilated.

Some houses boasted two rooms, not built together, but, rather, separated by an open court, each room being entered from the court. Some of the well-to-do citizens built a room for guests on their roof, though this room was seldom of the same

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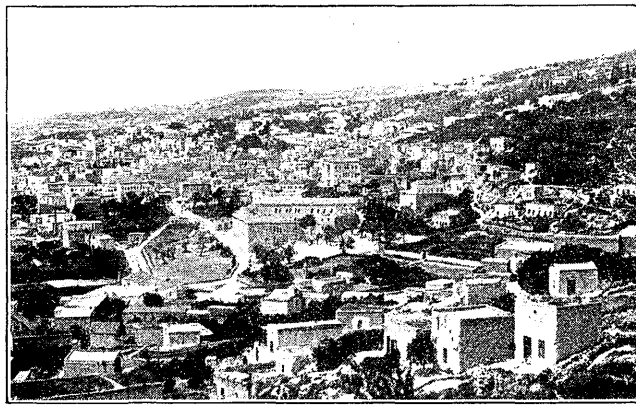

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How the houses were built.—What kind of a house do you live in? What part of it do you like best? What makes it so comfortable and attractive to you? There is probably no country in the world that spends so much thought and money in building comfortable homes and in providing attractive and useful furniture as does our own. We can hardly imagine that people anywhere could actually live in such barren and unpleasant places as the homes in Nazareth in Jesus' day. What were they like? Let us find out.

The first thing we discover is that the homes of the common people were built of clay. Imagine living in a mud house—just one room with four thick walls and an opening for a door, and with possibly another opening for a window! The roof was made of dried grass, broom, or reeds overlaid with mud, and finally with lime or cement to make it waterproof. Much walked-over-mud or clay was the only floor to be found, except in the better homes, where stones or rough-hewn boards were used. It goes without saying that these houses were cold, damp, and ill-ventilated.

Some houses boasted two rooms, not built together, but, rather, separated by an open court, each room being entered from the court. Some of the well-to-do citizens built a room for guests on their roof, though this room was seldom of the same

substantial construction as the room below. Its walls were built of reeds or saplings fastened together and covered with mud or clay. If it had a roof, it was seldom more than a cloth awning to keep out the sun and rain. This room was reached by a ladder or a flight of stairs on the outside of the house. During the hot summer months the Hebrew families often used the roofs of their houses as a "summer home," thus escaping the confusion and heat of the street below.

Perhaps you may have sung, or at least heard the old song, "They Kept the Pig in the Parlor." If you would change "pig" to ox, sheep, goat, or donkey, you could sing this song about the old Hebrew home, for it provided a shelter for family and beasts alike, though a slight attempt was made to separate the animals from the family by a fence through the center of the room.

Furniture.—Interior furnishings in Jesus' home, as in other Nazareth homes, no doubt, served only the simplest needs, and resembled in no sense the comfort and convenience of our modern American homes. In the center of the floor stood a rough tripod about three feet high holding the lamp, a small clay vessel shaped like a saucer in which the burning wick floated in olive oil.

The more prosperous people had a low table with a chair or two and perhaps a few cushions. The poorer classes had little more than the bare floor with mats to take the place of chair and table. Rich and poor alike slept on the floor, on a mat which could be spread out during the night and rolled up during the day, the entire family sleeping together, always with feet pointed toward the central light.

Along one of the walls were bins for storing meal and flour, or shelves on which stood bottles of oil, and the cooking utensils. In every house could be found some kind of a chest containing heirlooms, relics, family treasures, and garments worn only in worship. In the homes of common people pictures and other artistic effects, with the exception of tapestry or silk curtains or spreads, were entirely lacking. What barren places these homes must have been! It was in such a place that Jesus lived and grew up, and in his later life he knew not even this comfort, for he said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matthew 8. 20).

The daily bread.—What is your favorite dish? When your mother wants to please you very much, what does she have for lunch or for dinner? Of course you like bread, but would you want to make most of your meals on bread? You would have had to do that, had you lived in Jesus' home, for bread was the principal food, and you would have only two meals a day, breakfast and supper. Would you have liked that?

Bread was baked usually from wheat, though the poorer people used barley and millet, the round loaves being about eight inches in diameter and two inches thick. Two of these made a very good meal. Nearly every home had its own clay oven, a dome-shaped affair four or five feet wide, built outside the house. A fire was built of dried grass, wood, or refuse and allowed to smolder during the night, so that the oven would be thoroughly heated for the next day's baking.

In addition to bread, the meal also provided a common dish of curds or stew which would be placed on a low stool or table in the center of the group. Each person would dip his bread into this dish and then eat it. Individual eating utensils were quite lacking, bread serving the purpose of knife, fork and spoon. After every meal each person not only washed his hands, but rinsed out his mouth with water. Whenever guests were present a more elaborate meal was provided, and the guest would be greeted with a kiss and then either his host or the host's servant would wash his feet. He was always seated at the right of his host.

Shepherds and farmers seldom held rigidly to regular meal times or eating habits. They carried their food with them in the large pockets of their outer garments, which provided ample room for a loaf of bread or two, cheese, olives, figs, and dates or dried fish.

Jesus' family.—Can you imagine Jesus in such a home—living in a mud house, sleeping on the floor, eating coarse, common food, having none of the comforts that we know and enjoy to-day? For this is the kind of home in which Jesus spent his early life.

We know very little about Jesus' family except a few bare facts that have come down to us. The father, Joseph, was a carpenter. His mother's name was Mary. Jesus mentions Joseph not at all, so we have surmised that he must have died when Jesus was just a lad. Possibly Joseph was quite a bit older than Mary. Jesus, being the oldest son, may have had the responsibility of taking care of the family after Joseph's death. For this reason it was a good thing that he had learned his father's

trade. He had at least four brothers, James, Jose, Judah and Simeon, and two sisters, though we are not sure what their names were.

Jesus must have loved Joseph very dearly, for he spoke so often and so freely of a father's love. He must have grown very close to Joseph as they worked together in the carpenter shop. One of Jesus' most beautiful stories pictures a loving father welcoming home his wayward son. May we not say that Jesus came to understand God as Father more perfectly, at least in part because he found such fine qualities in Joseph?

For You to Do:

1. Compare your home with the kind of home in which Jesus grew up. How do these two homes differ in architecture and construction? in furnishings and conveniences?
2. What could a boy like Jesus find to do in his home to help? What do you find to do around your home to help?
3. Look up in your *Book of Knowledge* or in an encyclopedia the following:
   (1) Tools used in carpentry in Jesus' time.
   (2) The kind of clothes the people of Palestine wear to-day; the kind they wore in Jesus' day.

Memorize:

The poem "O Son of Man," page 23, and find in your Bibles Proverbs 6. 20–22. Read these verses and then memorize them.

CHAPTER IV

GOING TO SCHOOL WITH JESUS

"HEAR, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates" (Deuteronomy 6. 6–9).

Going to school at home.—These words from Deuteronomy were God's command to the Hebrew people, and from them each parent learned his duty as to the education of his children. In a truly religious home children had every opportunity to observe and take part in certain rituals. Explanations of their meanings were an important part of their early education.

Naturally, children would ask questions: why their father wore those queer-looking straps around his head when he prayed, and what was in the little box fastened by these straps on his forehead and on his right arm, why he wore a shawl when he prayed, why he prayed at set times and why his prayers were always the same. Jewish parents found their first duty as teachers to explain carefully and clearly the meaning of the religious rites and practices performed in the home.

We can imagine that Jesus listened eagerly as his father told him and his brothers and sisters the meaning of the *phylacteries*. (You may find in your Bible certain verses that explain this peculiar custom: Exodus 13. 9–10; Deuteronomy 6. 8, and 11–18.)

If you have read these verses at the beginning of this chapter you know that a *phylactery* is something to be worn while the Hebrew prays. It consisted of two small boxes usually made from the skin of an animal. One box was worn on the forehead and the other on the right arm. In each box were placed rolls of parchment containing Bible verses, and each roll was tied with white hairs from the tail of a cow or calf. These boxes were held in place by straps and the knot tied on the forehead was in the shape of the Hebrew letter for d or *daleth* (ד), and the knot on the arm, like the Hebrew *yodh* (י), while on the boxes themselves was the letter *shin* (שׁ), the three letters together making the word *shaddai*, or "Almighty," a name often used for God.

Besides answering their questions about the religious ceremonies observed in the home, the Hebrew father would tell the stories of brave men and women who had figured in Hebrew history: Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph, the children of Israel suffering the hardships of Egyptian slavery, their release under the strong leadership of Moses; stories of David and Solomon, and of the prophets who pointed the way to Jehovah as the one true God, and who made clear the fact that right living was more pleasing to God than elaborate feasts and ceremonies. No doubt Jesus and Joseph spent many an hour discussing these matters as they worked together in the carpenter shop.

If they were able to do so, Hebrew fathers taught their children to read even before they were sent to school. The letters of the alphabet were drawn on a board for the children to learn them. Then they were able to put them together into words so that they could read. Many, many people living in Palestine at the time of Jesus were not able to read or understand the Hebrew language, for they spoke Aramaic, a language somewhat like Hebrew. Whenever Hebrew was used in public worship, an interpreter had to translate it into Aramaic so that the common people could understand it. Jesus probably knew no Hebrew as a child, but he must have learned it as he studied the Scriptures. He probably knew how to speak and read Greek, which was the language of commerce and literature in that day.

At the synagogue school.—When Jesus was about six years old he probably went to the synagogue school, like all Jewish children of his age. His teacher, called a *chazan*, was secured and paid by the congregation. School began at ten o'clock in the morning and lasted until three in the afternoon, except during the hot summer months of July and August, when the sessions lasted only four hours. During these hot months the teachers were not allowed to flog their pupils.

If he had not already done so, Jesus learned to read and write in the synagogue school, and he studied only the Scriptures—that portion contained in the law, called the Torah. In connection with this he learned certain prayers and benedictions used in the daily life and worship of a devout Jew. Jesus' schooling ended with the synagogue school,

for instead of going on to the rabbiniacal college for a more thorough study of the law, he went into his father's carpenter shop and learned how to make oxbows and plows. His education must be considered slight, though his ability to think, to reason, to make clear the meaning of true religion, to help his fellows to solve their problems was very great. What Jesus failed to learn in the schools of his day he learned as he went about the towns and villages of Galilee, as he talked with learned people, as he studied God's handiwork in nature, as he became acquainted with people.

What the people in Jesus' day thought and taught about their world.—Learning in Jesus' day included little more than the study of religion, for all science, art, and literature that existed outside the sacred writings was considered profane, and therefore wicked. Arithmetic, for example, was chiefly a matter of computing dates on the Jewish calendar, so many days to the Feast of Tabernacles, so many months to the Passover, and included also the figuring necessary to carry on one's business in weights and measures, in distances, in the amount of taxation, and so forth.

Knowledge of the natural world such as we have in our studies in botany, zoology, and biology was very limited, though we do find attempts to classify things in nature according to animals, insects, and plants. Throughout the Bible are verses that show a rare appreciation of the beauties of nature, as you will see in Psalms 19

> "The heavens declare the glory of God;
> And the firmament showeth his handiwork."

Lessons from nature are drawn also, as "Go to the ant, thou sluggard" (Proverbs 6. 6), to show the importance of hard work in carrying out one's duty.

The Hebrews in the time of Jesus had very little knowledge of science as we know it to-day, and very likely Jesus "looked upon the earth as a circular plane. God was seated upon this plane, the circumference of which had been originally traced by him. The four cardinal points were called the ends of the heavens, the four sides or corners of the earth. To point to them the Jew did not turn to the north as we do, but to the east. As he looked toward the east, to his right was the south, to his left was the north and behind him was the west. Jerusalem was the center of the round flat disc, and the surface of this plane was divided into two parts: the land of Israel and that which was not the land of Israel. Its inhabitants were divided in the same way into Jews and Gentiles, those within and those without. . . . The land of Israel was the center of the disc surrounded on all sides by the world. At the edge of the disc was the sea, the Great Sea upon which no one had yet ventured far. It encircled the round plane, and as it washed the shores of pagan countries, they were sometimes called "'the Region of the Sea.'"[1]

To the Hebrews the universe was vast, for above this disc known as the earth was a solid sky shaped like a bowl that fitted down over the edge of the farthest sea. When it rained, water passed through holes pierced in the solid surface of the sky. It was

[1] *Palestine in the Time of Christ*, by E. L. Stapfer, A. C. Armstrong and Son, publishers, London, 1885, pp. 248–249.

said that the "windows of heaven" opened and the rain descended. The distance was so great that five hundred years would be required to go from the earth to the top of the dome, and five hundred years from one end of the earth to the other. God was seated on a throne in the space high above the earth somewhere between the top of the dome and Jerusalem. Of course the earth stood still—it did not move, the stars, sun and moon revolved around it and the length of the month was regulated by the length of time required for the moon to travel around the earth. The sun and moon were merely "lights in the firmament" hung in the heavens, a "greater light" for the day and a "lesser light" for the night.

Our knowledge of our world to-day is so much different from this that we can hardly believe that anyone really held these ideas at all. We must remember, however, that even as late as when Columbus discovered America, more than fourteen hundred years after the time of Jesus, everyone but a very few daring persons believed the earth to be flat, and it is only quite recently that we have learned that the earth revolves about the sun, and that we gained any knowledge at all of distances between the earth, the sun, and the moon. Now we know that the earth keeps an average distance of 93,000,000 miles from the sun, which is 300,000 times as large as the earth, that the moon is very, very much smaller than the earth and is only 240,000 miles away. We know now that we receive light from the sun and from the millions of other stars that are a part of our vast universe, for the sun is really only a star. Light traveling at a rate of 186,000

miles per second reaches the earth only eight minutes after it leaves the sun, but the nearest star is so far away from the earth that light leaves it four and one-half years before it reaches us. There are some stars so far away from our earth that light which left them hundreds of thousands of years ago has not yet reached us. Our world is much more vast than was the world that Jesus looked out upon and marveled at.

For You to Do:

1. How would you have enjoyed going to school in the kind of school that Jesus went to? How does your school differ from his? Let us discover some of the differences as to
   (1) Time for school and length of sessions.
   (2) Teacher.
   (3) Subjects studied.
2. How does your knowledge of geography differ from that of Jesus' day? Your knowledge of the stars, the sun and moon? Of where rain comes from? Of the size and shape of the earth?
3. Look up in your *Book of Knowledge* or in the encyclopedia the names of Galileo and Copernicus and find out what these men did to change the people's knowledge of our world.
4. If the theory that the earth was flat as thought by the Jews had never been disproved, what would have been the effect upon civilization? on commerce? What have Galileo and Copernicus contributed to civilization?
5. Without doubt the learning that you get in the great American public school is much superior in many ways to what boys and girls attending

school in Jesus' day received. In what subject, however, did the old Jewish schools specialize? *Religion.* Make a list of as many important religious things as you can discover that were taught in the Jewish schools. Show how these things would be worth teaching to-day.

Memorize: The Schema, Deuteronomy 6. 9.

CHAPTER V

A TIME FOR TESTING AND REVIEW

No. 1

You are given an opportunity to-day to report to your teacher the chief facts about the world that Jesus lived in that you have gathered thus far. You will find here two tests, and then a few questions to think about. The tests that you will write are called *completion tests*, and, of course, you are familiar with this kind of test, for you have it in school.

Read carefully the directions, and then when your teacher tells you to begin, fill in the blank spaces with the correct words. *Write plainly.* When you have finished sit quietly until your teacher tells you what to do next.

TEST NO. I. COMPLETION. SCORE.....

Directions.—This test covers the high spots in the lessons covered so far in this course. Your answers will measure the extent to which you have mastered the chief facts. Fill in each blank space with what seems to you to be the correct word. When you have finished, your teacher will tell you how nearly correct your answers are.

1. Palestine is a very small country, not much larger in size than the State of.....

It is bounded on the north by..... and ....., on the.....by Arabia, on the south by the country of....., and on the.....by a sea called the.....

2. It contains many famous places:
   (1) A river called.....
   (2) Two seas, one called.....and the other the.....
3. The chief seaport is called.....
4. The principal occupations in Palestine are..... ..... and ....., although many trades and professions were to be found there even in Jesus' day. Among these were (1) ..... (2) ..... (3)..... ..... (4) ..... (5) .....
5. Jesus' father was a....., and Jesus too learned this trade.
6. Jesus spent his early life in a city called....., located on the.....of..... The houses of the common people were built of....., and very.....furnished, with only a few necessities, such as (1)..... (2)..... (3)..... The chief item of the menu was.....
7. Jesus' father's name was.....and his mother's..... He had at least.....brothers and.....sisters.
8. Jesus' early education took place at..... ..... but at the age of.....he probably went with the other boys of his age to the..... ..... His education consisted mostly of the following: (1)....., (2)..... (3).....

TEST NO. II. COMPLETION. SCORE.....

Directions:—This test covers a poem which you were asked to memorize. How well do you know it? Fill in the blank spaces, and then let your teacher tell you how nearly correct your answers are.

"O Son of....., thou madest.....,
Through quiet.....in shop and.....
The.....of common things
The chance of life that each.....brings.

"O.....true, may we.....
In.....life, thy.....will;
In.....call, thy.....we hear
To.....life, through.....sincere."

What does this poem mean? Pick out two chief teachings or meanings and write them here.

1.....,
.....
2.....
.....

CHAPTER VI

THE HOPES OF JESUS' PEOPLE

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. . . . The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness, . . . make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." (Isaiah 40. 1–5.)

FOR centuries the Hebrew people had been hearing these words and hoping that they would come true. They longed for better days. They prayed for freedom. They craved new power. For they had not known freedom since the glorious days when David was their king, nor prosperity since David's son, Solomon, had ruled them. Then they were a strong nation with a mighty army and even a navy. They carried on trade with their neighboring nations and they were respected by all.

The division of the kingdom.—But when King Solomon died things began to change, for they couldn't agree among themselves as to which one of the king's sons should be their ruler, or as to how their great nation should be ruled. So they divided their strength, their possessions, their power, and those in the north were ruled by one king with their capitol at Samaria, and those in the south were ruled

by another king with their capitol at Jerusalem. They were called the Northern Kingdom, or Israel, and the Southern Kingdom, or Judah. And then the trouble began! For in union there is power, but where the strength of a nation is sapped by civil war and disorganization, that nation becomes easy prey for its enemies.

Destruction of Samaria.—And that is what happened to both Israel and Judah. They were threatened, then attacked by the powerful nations around them. They were drawn into alliances that led finally to their downfall. They tried to hold their own, to keep their independence, but with strife among themselves and with kings who were weak and wicked, they were unable to hold out against their enemies. For in the year 721 B. C. Sargon II, a mighty king of the Assyrians, swept through the land and after a siege that lasted several days, conquered Samaria. As was the custom in those days, the conquering army sacked the cities and towns, destroyed the buildings, devastated the fields and vineyards, then led the captives away to their own country.

The Babylonian exile.—Nor did things go well with the Southern Kingdom. It had more wealth and a stronger army, so for nearly a hundred and fifty years after its northern neighbors were conquered, was it able to fight off its enemies. Meanwhile Assyria fell before the power of Egypt, and Egypt in turn was subdued by the Chaldeans, and in 586 B. C. Nebuchadnezzar, the Chaldean king, besieged and conquered Jerusalem, the capital of Judah. As Sargon II had taken the Israelites into captivity, so did Nebuchadnezzar, first the princes and leaders,

then the wealthy landowners and artisans, and finally the common people. Some broke away and fled to Egypt, and the very poor remained in Judah to live as best they could or to die from starvation, or at the hands of hostile tribes. But the captives were taken to Babylon, then the richest and most beautiful city in the world, famous for its magnificent palaces, its "hanging gardens," its learning and its market places.

Without doubt many of the captives were happy in their new and pleasant surroundings, and quickly learned the ways of their new country, but the great number longed for their old homes and churches —synagogues, they called them. Sometimes they grew bitter, and said that God had forgotten them, that he no longer loved them, that he had treated them unfairly. Then it was that certain loyal friends of God would rise up and tell them that better days were coming, that God would deliver his people from their bondage. And always some took heart when they heard these promises.

The return to Jerusalem.—Never again did the Hebrews know the joy of independence. Their fortunes were bound up in the fortunes of their captors. They had only to submit, though it was hard, for they were passed from one victor to another and had little to say for themselves. In time the power of Babylon was broken by Cyrus, the Persian conqueror. One of the first things he did was to deport the captive Hebrews, and send them back to their own homes. How happy they were to go, but how sad they were when they saw their beloved Jerusalem, haunted by wild animals, overrun with

weeds, the wall broken down, the buildings destroyed, the Temple in ruins, their homes crumbled to dust! Perhaps a few wished that they had stayed in Babylon with their friends who had remained. No doubt they questioned more than ever the love of God who had returned them to this.

Changing fortunes of the Hebrews.—Many years were spent in rebuilding the city, in erecting a new Temple, in making laws to govern the people, in teaching strict obedience to the ways of God—many years, filled with misunderstanding, discouragement, and even strife. And before they knew it they had new rulers, this time, the Greeks. For, after many wars between the Persians and the Greeks, the Greeks were victorious and ruled the world under the powerful leadership of Alexander the Great. The Hebrews felt this influence, for the Greeks tried to force their ideas and customs upon them. They set up in Hebrew synagogues statues of their own gods, and imposed serious hardships upon those who loved and worshiped the true God. In the midst of these heartbreaking experiences more than one faithful Hebrew cried out, "How long, O God, how long?"

Some of the Hebrews resisted this Greek power, and under the leadership of strong and fearless men called the Maccabees, they almost succeeded in throwing off their yoke of bondage. Bitter battles were fought, many persons were killed, and when victory seemed almost certain, the tide of battle changed and the Hebrews found themselves still a captive people, but no longer of the Greeks but of the Romans, who had overthrown the Greeks' rule of the world. From hand to hand they were passed

with nothing to say as to who their rulers should be.

Growth in religious faith.—Throughout these centuries of submission to the stronger nations of the world the Hebrews lost their national power but grew strong in their religious faith. For eight hundred years they struggled against oppression and fought for their independence, but their efforts led only to continued submission to foreign rule. Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece—one by one these great nations laid heavy hands upon the Hebrews and left their imprint. It would almost seem that a nation could hardly survive such a history, but in the time of Jesus the Hebrews, then under Roman rule, were just as much Hebrews as they had been eight centuries before when they were an independent nation. They had lost their political freedom and independence, but they had kept their ideals. Through suffering they had grown strong in spirit, for the thing that kept them alive was the hope of a better day.

In the days of David and Solomon, in the period when the kingdom was divided into Israel and Judah, before the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem, during the years of captivity, after the Hebrews returned to Jerusalem under the domination of Persia, Greece, and Rome—through eight centuries God's spokesmen, called prophets, tried to show the Hebrews how to live according to God's ways, how to seek God's forgiveness for their wrongdoing, how to remain true to his teachings. They preached in the market place, and from the Temple steps, wherever they could get a hearing, calling the wicked to repentance, and pointing out the way of righteousness. They declared that the nation would

fall in ruins, that destruction was bound to come, if God's ways were forsaken. And when destruction came, they tried to bring hope and comfort to the people, as they proclaimed better days to come.

Hopes for a better day.—Not everyone agreed as to how or when these better days were to come. In fact, many could not believe that they would ever come. Some longed for a Saviour to deliver them from bondage, and restore the throne of David. They desired above everything else to return to their former glory, to be a great and mighty nation that could easily subdue and dominate their enemies.

There were others who looked for another kind of deliverance—a great event that would come in some sudden, spectacular way, raising the Hebrews up above their neighbors into a kind of heavenly kingdom ruled by Jehovah, their God—a kingdom in the clouds where the righteous would prosper and where happiness would reign!

A few brave spirits cherished still another hope. They saw little chance for their nation to return to its former political power with a great army to subdue all their enemies, nor were they attracted by the thought of a heavenly colony existing in mid-air. They saw their nation as a servant to the rest of the world, the one nation that knew the true God. Through suffering and hardship they had come to know God as no other nation could know him, and it was their duty to show God to the rest of the world, and make plain the pathway of righteousness. In such a nation there would be no powerful armies or navies, no prosperous business organization, no great show or display, but the simple and true worship of God expressed in justice,

righteousness, peace, and good will among all people everywhere.

Jesus and the hopes of his people.—In the writings of the Hebrews children were taught at home and at synagogue schools these ideals for Israel's future, just as in our day certain great hopes for our own country are taught. Naturally, the boys and girls accepted the ideals, as you and I do, that appealed to them most as being best for their nation and for themselves.

It was into this world that Jesus was born. As a child he heard the stories of his nation's suffering. He knew the history of his people, and he was familiar with their hopes and ideals for the future. As he grew to manhood, how keenly he must have felt the need and suffering of his beloved people! No doubt he grew sad and even angry when he saw how the poor were oppressed by the rich, how little children and women were ill-treated, how men in high places forgot the true God, for he was of the common people and doubtless often felt the pinch of want and the discomfort of debt. We are told that he "was filled with compassion" whenever he beheld the sick and suffering, the poor and needy. He longed to help them. Even as a boy he must have dreamed of better things for his people, and how he could make his dreams come true. We shall soon find out what he discovered.

CHAPTER VII

JESUS AND THE DOCTORS

"O Master Workman of the race,
Thou Man of Galilee,
Who with the eyes of early youth
Eternal things did see,
We thank thee for thy boyhood faith
That shone thy whole life through;
'Did ye not know it is my work,
My Father's work to do?' " [1]

—*Jay T. Stocking.*

"THE Passover is well-nigh over, my brother Jude," spoke Simeon, one of the learned men of the Temple, "and what a crowd of pilgrims have gathered here this week! They have come even from Damascus and Beersheba, and many are leaving now, for they have long journeys to make."

"What a sorry sight the temple court!" answered Jude, another doctor. "Has Jehovah, the God of our Fathers, been in this place this week? Is he pleased with the cries of lambs led to the slaughter, with the sight of so much blood?"

"I too have wondered that, Jude. Do we not read in the prophets

'I hate, I despise your feasts,
And I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Yea, though you offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings,

[1] From *Worship and Song*, by Winchester and Conant. Copyright by the Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.

I will not accept them;
Neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. . . .
But let justice roll down as waters,
And righteousness as a mighty stream.'"

"Yes, my brother, so spoke the prophet Amos many years ago, and I think he spoke the truth. 'Let justice roll down as waters'—? Truly, then, Jehovah, the God of our Fathers was not pleased with what he saw here. Look, Simeon," said Jude, "even now the money-changers are clamoring for their last few shekels. See that disagreeable Benjamin down there robbing that old man. He refuses to give him back his change."

"Robbers! cheats!" exclaimed Simeon. "Would that I could drive them out of the Temple of the most high God. I saw them yesterday trying to sell unclean animals. Look, Jude, at those beggars hanging on the Temple gate. Have you ever seen so many beggars, so many cripples, so many blind people in one place?"

"Oh, there is Joel, the haughty Pharisee. Did you see him kick that beggar out of his way?" asked Jude.

"Little wonder," chuckled Simeon in a half joking way. "He held his head so high and he was praying so loudly that he could neither see nor hear a blind beggar lying across his path."

"How can you jest, Simeon?" reproached Jude. "The God of our Fathers is not in this place."

So talked the learned doctors, Simeon and Jude, as they watched from their secluded Temple porch the crowds in the court below making a last sacrifice,

buying a last pair of doves, if they could not afford a lamb, going in and out of the inner courts for a last visit within the holy place. Above the noise of the crowd could be heard the bleating of lambs, the music of distant choirs, the shouts of merchants, the clanging of brazen vessels, the tinkling of coins, the last piercing cries of animal or bird being sacrificed upon the altar to the God of the Hebrews.

"O, Jehovah of hosts, wherefore have we fasted? Show us what is right, what is pleasing unto thee and we will walk forever in thy way." And the two old men stood as they prayed with outstretched hands. They had not heard the footsteps of a lad on the porch and they did not know that he had come until he spoke to them.

"Tell me, learned men of God, what does this mean? I have been taught at my father's knee the story of the Passover, and I am thrilled with the wonder and beauty of the Temple. I have never heard anything so beautiful as the Temple bells or as the music of the Temple choirs; but tell me, is *that* pleasing to Jehovah our God?" pointing to the bloody, disfigured, unlovely Temple court.

"Who are you, my lad?" asked Simeon. "And where have you come from?" added Jude.

"My name is Jesus, the eldest son of Joseph. We have come all the way from Nazareth for the Passover. This is my first visit to Jerusalem," answered the lad, his face glowing with pride.

"The eldest son! And proud your father and mother must be of you," said Simeon. "Do you go every day to the synagogue? Have you not learned there the way of Jehovah?"

"Oh, yes," said Jesus. "I go every day and I

(c) Harold Copping, 1914

"WIST YE NOT?"

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have learned many things about our people and our God. I find time to help my Father too in his carpenter shop. I think I've learned most from him as we've been working there together. He has told me wonderful stories about Abraham, Jacob, David, and the others. He has told me most though about the great men of God, the prophets. Tell me, learned men, what does it mean, 'I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies? Yea, though you offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. . . . But let judgment roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream?' "

Simeon and Jude looked at each other in amazement, almost afraid. Neither one wanted to answer the lad's question, but Simeon, unable to resist his eager look, said, "Those are the words of God revealed to the prophet Amos."

"Yes," answered the lad, "I know that, but what do they mean—that God is not pleased with all of that?" waving toward the Temple court.

"That is not for us to say, my lad?" put in Jude, "for we are commanded to observe each year the Feast of the Passover after the rules laid down in the Law. Why do you ask such questions? You are much too young."

"That is what my father told me yesterday, when I asked him the same question, but I want an answer, for I have seen so many strange things since I've been here—so many beggars, so many sick and crippled people, so many poor. They seem hungering for something more than this. And just look at those money-changers down there. How

they lie and cheat and steal! One of them even tried to sell my father a lamb with a broken leg." And then reflecting, " 'Justice'—'righteousness'—what do those words mean, learned doctors?"

"You puzzle us with your questions. You should not think of such things. You're much too young," answered Simeon, and Jude nodded approvingly. "Yes, you are much too young."

But the boy Jesus would not be put off, "What is most pleasing to our God, I ask you—caring for the sick and lame and blind, being honest and fair, or killing animals and birds and burning them on the altar? Or standing in public places making long and loud prayers, as I've seen the Pharisees do? Tell me, learned doctors. Surely you must know." And they saw a strange light in his eye.

"Lad, you are a child after God's own heart. You have answered your own question. You know what pleases God most. Have you not read in the law, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, . . . and thy neighbor as thyself'? " spoke Simeon, and Jude added, bowing his white head over a much-used parchment scroll as he read:

" 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? . . . He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' "

When he had finished, the three—Simeon, Jude, and Jesus—sat as if held by some mighty spell, broken only as the lad whispered the words after

the old man: " 'To do justly, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God.' "

He had scarcely finished when a stir was heard at the entrance of the porch followed by questions from Jesus' mother, who had just run in all out of breath. "Son, why have you treated us this way?" she asked. "Your father and I have looked everywhere for you, and we have been greatly worried."

But Jesus, with a wonderful light in his eyes, answered, "Why did you worry, mother? I have been here with the doctors discovering how to help Jehovah, my God, in his work."

CHAPTER VIII

JESUS' BAPTISM

"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2. 52).

EIGHTEEN years pass and nothing is heard of Jesus, the lad who discovered in the Temple ways that he could help God in his work. We must suppose that he spent these years in or near Nazareth, working at his carpenter's trade. It is very likely that he traveled about among the towns near by—fixing fences, repairing rafters in the mud houses of his neighbors, making and mending plows, ox-bows and the yokes of water-carriers. He might even have gone so far away from home as Jerusalem, where he helped to build the governor's palace, or worked on the Temple. He worked wherever work was to be done, we can be sure of that.

These were probably busy years for Jesus, and fruitful ones too, for they gave him a chance to get acquainted with his neighbors, to see the needs and problems of his people, to study the conditions of his country. He must have spent long hours studying the Scriptures, reveling in the stories of his forefathers, and the sermons of the great prophets. For when we see him for the first time after these eighteen years of silence he seems burning up with some powerful spirit that drives him out of the silence into active allegiance to the cause of righteousness.

Throughout Palestine in those days could be found small groups of men—radicals we would call them

to-day—some clamoring for a revolution and others demanding religious reforms through other means, all eager to improve the lot of the common people, who were suffering greatly from the domination of foreign power. One of these bands was led by an odd-looking person called John the Baptist. With his followers he lived in the desert, eating only dry locusts and honey. He wore a hairy pelt over his shoulders, belted in around the waist with a leather strap. His hair was long and shaggy, and his whole appearance must not have been different from our idea of a wild man. He went about up and down the Jordan shouting and preaching:

"Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Scores of people came to hear him, and many were baptized in the Jordan in order that they might be ready to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Can you imagine such a group around the banks of the Jordan—men and women in gaily colored Oriental headdress and garments, old men and young men, little children clinging to their parents, and in the midst the hairy, wild-eyed prophet proclaiming his burning message? And Jesus was among these people—a man now, possibly thirty years of age. His shoulders were strong from hard work, his whole body looked as if it had been trained to do heavy toil. His face was tanned with the sun and wind of outdoor life. His eyes burned with a strange light as he listened intently to the queer-looking preacher on the river's bank:

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Make ye ready the way of the Lord,
Make his paths straight.
Every valley shall be filled,

And every mountain and hill shall be brought low;
And the crooked shall become straight,
And the rough ways smooth;
And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." [1]

Then the preacher grew more violent in his attacks upon the wickedness of his day, and more earnest in his appeals for repentance.

"Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance."[2]

Strong words, but the preacher was not afraid to use them. He hurled them like a bomb into the midst of his hearers, hoping that they would hit some temple priest whose religion amounted to little more than dressing up in ceremonial robes and making a show in public, or that they would stab the conscience of some rich farmer who ill treated his slaves, or that they would strike those who engaged in secret sins. He wanted them to join his company of disciples, and spread his gospel throughout the country. He wanted them to be baptized, and through that act declare themselves in the cause of righteousness.

So powerful was the prophet's message that the people couldn't resist it, and flocked into the water to be baptized. And Jesus followed. He wanted to be numbered among those who were working for better things and he wanted his friends and neighbors to realize that he was deciding to give himself to the movement for righteousness and justice.

How thrilled Jesus must have been that day to join that eager throng, and how happy John the

[1] Luke 3. 4–6.
[2] Luke 3. 7–8a.

Baptist must have been when he saw Jesus coming to be baptized! We are told that Jesus' face shone with a new light and that he heard God speaking to him.

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

CHAPTER IX

JESUS CHOOSES THE PATH OF SERVICE

AFTER his baptism in the Jordan, Jesus had to get away—anywhere to be alone so that he might be free to think over what he had done. He could never be the same again. Everything was changed now, for he had declared in public his intention to help in God's work, and he had heard God's voice, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." How could he make clear to his friends and neighbors, to his fellow countrymen, to the whole world, that he was God's man? How could he help God in his work?

To find answers to these questions Jesus hurried away to a lonely place where in the quiet of long days and nights he could think and pray. No one knew where he had gone, and no one came to search for him—he was all alone with God. He stayed there forty days, we are told, and went without food.

What did he think about during those painfully lonely days in that wild and uncomfortable place? When he felt pangs of hunger, he could hear an evil voice mocking him and tempting him: "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

But Jesus only answered: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Jesus was beginning to realize, what he later found to be all too true, that if he was to be the true Son and servant of God, he would have to endure self-denial and physical hardship, rather than enjoy comfort and luxury.

How could he make the people realize that he was God's anointed? No doubt, Jesus puzzled over this question for long hours at a time. He thought of Israel's great leaders, of the prophets and their hopes for Israel's redemption, of the needs of his own day. How could he become the leader of his people? How could he gain their recognition and support? Again, the evil voice spoke and Jesus could imagine himself in some spectacular place, making a great demonstration that would arrest the attention of the people, and win for him popular acclaim. He imagined himself on the pinnacle of the Temple, and he heard the evil voice: "If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, 'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; And on their hands they shall bear thee up, Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.' "

If he could just perform some miracle! No, that would not be the way, for he would have to win his way into the hearts of the people relying upon God's help as he worked through natural laws. So he answered the voice, and said, "Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God."

The problem that fretted Jesus most must have been this: How could he do the work which God expected of him? By gaining position and wealth? By making popular demonstrations? By putting himself first? As he pondered over this question

he heard often that same evil voice, which said, as Jesus thought of all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory that would be his if he could rule them, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

And Jesus answered, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' "

Jesus earned in those days the right to be called God's Chosen One, for he discovered that he could help God in his work best only as he denied himself, gave up personal desires and ambitions, and devoted his life to discovering ways of worshiping and serving God: by helping his neighbors to come to know God too as he knew him.

For You to Do:

1. Read the biblical account of the Temptation—Luke 4. 1–12.

2. How would you answer these questions?:
   (1) What qualities of character did Jesus display in this great experience of his life?
   (2) Just suppose that Jesus had yielded to any one of the three temptations that came to him, how different would have been the story of his life? The history of Christianity?
   If he had
      a. Chosen to make a spectacular demonstration of his power?
      b. Decided to lead a revolution and attempt to establish God's kingdom by force? (This is what the people

wanted. What chance would such a revolution have had against the Empire? What would have become of Jesus and his cause?)

(3) How may we follow Jesus' example in meeting the tests that come to us

a. To gain leadership of a gang by "bullying" the weaker members?

b. To win the approval of teachers and parents by "showing off?"

c. To gain favor over some friend, playmate or classmate by taking an unfair advantage?

d. To get something without effort on our part by

(*a*) Cheating in examinations?

(*b*) Talebearing to lay blame on someone else when it really belongs to you?

(*c*) "Getting by" with the least possible effort?

Memorize this verse:

"O Jesus, once a Nazareth boy,
And tempted like as we,
All inward foes help us destroy
And spotless all to be.
We trust thee for the grace to win
The high, victorious goal,
Where purity shall conquer sin
In Christlike self-control."

A Prayer

O God, help us to love thee and worship thee and serve thee as Jesus did, when he was here on the earth. Help us to earn the right to be thy helpers, by following Jesus' example of self-forgetful service. Amen.

CHAPTER X

ANNOUNCING HIS DECISION TO HIS NEIGHBORS

"Is not this the carpenter?"

"THOU shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." How these words must have rung in Jesus' ears, and stirred in his heart, as he trudged his weary, hungry way back to Nazareth! And when he reached his home, such a greeting!

"Where have you been?" asked his mother, anxiously. "Have you no thought for us?"

"See all the work that has piled up since you went away," exclaimed a younger brother. "Ox-bows to mend, water-carriers to fix, plows to make. Where have you been all these weeks?"

Even the questions of his townspeople and of his family could not take away from Jesus the joy that was his, or the firm resolve that he had made to his God while he fasted and prayed in the desert. "Why worry about things like that?" answered Jesus. "The ox-bows, water-carriers and plows can wait. I have more important things to think of."

"More important things? Must we not eat?" they shouted. "How you have neglected us! What a far-away look in your eye!"

But Jesus went on about his work, calmly and happily. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God"

—nothing could destroy those magic words or take them from him.

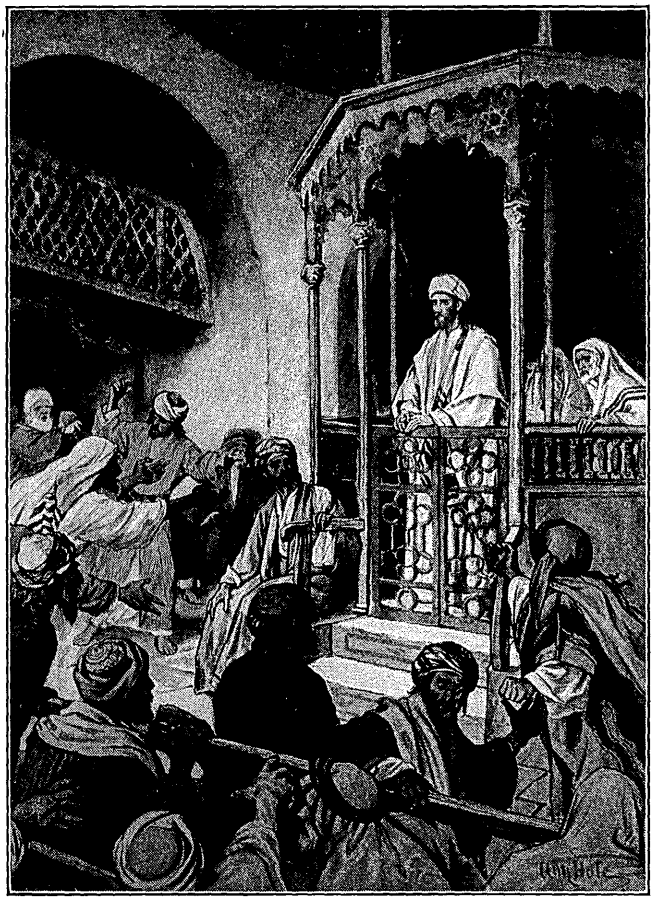
True to his vision of God in the wilderness, he went straight to the synagogue on the Sabbath, as he had done every Sabbath all his life. But how different it seemed to him this morning! How beautiful the music! How strangely inviting the whole surroundings! How hard the faces of the worshipers, his fellow townspeople, his neighbors! Would they understand him?

When it was his turn to read, he stood up, opened the book and read the words of the prophet Isaiah:

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me;
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor;
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Then he closed the book, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all were upon him, and shortly heads began to nod and tongues to wag, "Is not this the carpenter? Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph?" And noting their surprise Jesus continued:

"I can see that you're surprised," he must have said, "and many of you have probably heard reports of what I did in Capernaum to help the sick and the needy on my way home. You're saying: Physician, heal yourself. Do some of the same things here that you did in Capernaum, and we'll believe that you are God's anointed. But how can I? A prophet is honored and respected everywhere but at home



Artist, William Hole

PREACHING AT NAZARETH

and among his own people. You wouldn't believe me. I can tell that by the looks on your faces."

Seeing that some of the people were interested and eager to hear what he had to say, Jesus went on:

"You remember that in the days of Elijah there was a great famine because for three years and a half there was no rain. Now, there were many poor widows in that day, but to only one of them was Elijah sent—to Zarephath, in Sidon. There were many lepers in that country too, but we are told of only one that Elijah cleansed—Naaman."

At that the people began to stir again and mutter among themselves, "What could he mean?" "Who is he that he should flaunt himself before us—the carpenter's son?" "Why should he claim to be God's Chosen One?" "It is blasphemy."

And they grew very angry. Almost as one man, they got to their feet, rushed up to where Jesus was sitting and drove him out of the synagogue, toward the edge of the town.

And Jesus' family followed on the fringe of the crowd, his mother and his brothers and sisters. They kept shouting to him and urging him to go home with them, for they were very much ashamed of him—ashamed that any member of their family should create such a disgraceful scene. Surely, Jesus must be insane, out of his head. They must get him home and away from this angry mob. Perhaps they were thinking of the ox-bows, water-carriers, and plows waiting to be fixed, for they depended on Jesus' support.

As it moved along, the crowd gathered numbers and grew even more violent in its disapproval of

Jesus. "Blasphemer!" they shouted at him. "Who are you but a poor carpenter?"

And when they reached the outskirts of the town they would have thrown Jesus down over a high cliff, but he walked calmly right through their midst and got away. No one could lay hands upon him. And the people of Nazareth lost that day their chance to follow Jesus into the kingdom of heaven.

"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about. . . . And the multitudes sought after him, and came unto him, and would have stayed him, that he should not go from them. But he said unto them, I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for therefore was I sent" (Luke 4. 14, 42, 43).

For You to Think About:

1. Jane belonged to the Camp Fire Girls and was anxious to get as many "honors" as she could for various chores. She came home from Camp Fire meeting one day just delighted with her collection of beads for that day, and glowing with pride at the compliments given her by the Guardian. When she showed her beads to her family and told them what the Guardian had said, her older brother made fun of her, and called her beads "junk." "Any way," he said, "I can't see how you deserve any of that junk for working around home."

(1) What would you have done, if you had been in Jane's place? Become angry?
Said something mean to your brother?
Gone off by yourself to cry or pout?
Told your mother?

(2) What is the sensible, the Christian thing to do in a case like that?

(3) Suppose that you are Jane's brother. Do you think it is fair to make light of Jane's achievements? Why, or why not? How would you feel if Jane made fun of your Boy Scout badges? How should you treat Jane, when she comes home delighted with some honor?

2. Bill had been struggling with arithmetic for weeks, and had grown discouraged with his low marks. But whenever his teacher took particular pains to help him, Bill could always do his problems correctly. One day he received a mark of 100 on a paper, and he was so happy that he could hardly wait to get home to show the paper to his parents, and then his father only said, "Well, it's about time."

(1) Have you ever had an experience like Bill's? What did you do about it?

(2) Would Bill try harder than ever from now on to get 100's, or not so hard? Why?

(3) Do you think that Bill's father said the right thing to Bill? Why, or why not?

3. A class of boys in the church school complained often because nothing ever happened in the church that was especially interesting to them. They were just about sick of everything, when they got a new teacher. He was great—a big, husky football player! He knew a lot of interesting tricks too and he could tell the Bible stories in a way that just made the boys listen. He suggested that they organize their class into a club to meet at the church during the week. The boys thought this was a fine idea, and before long each one held some office in

the club. But when they asked the church officials for permission to meet in the church on a certain night after school, they were told that they couldn't, for the janitor couldn't be bothered by a lot of boys running around in the church.

(1) Have you ever been in this kind of a situation? How did you get out of it?

(2) Do you suppose that these boys had a bad reputation with the janitor for something they might have done to him? In this case, what could they do to make things right with him?

(3) What would you do to "save" the club? Why not hold the meetings at the homes of the different members? Any other suggestions?

4. How can we overcome disappointment when our friends make fun of us, stand in our way, or fail to understand us?

5. What would have happened to Jesus and his cause if he had let his friends and family in Nazareth kill his ideals and thwart his plans?

6. Read in your Bibles Luke 4. 16–21, then memorize this passage.

CHAPTER XI

JESUS CALLING HIS HELPERS

"Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult
Of our life's wild restless sea,
Day by day, his sweet voice soundeth,
Saying, 'Christian, follow me.' " [1]

What a disappointment it must have been to Jesus to be rejected by his own people, to be considered a blasphemer by his neighbors, and to be thought insane by his family—by his mother, who never quite understood him; by his brothers and sisters, who were annoyed with him and much embarrassed by his actions; and by his nieces and nephews, with whom he had played. They especially couldn't understand what had happened to their uncle, who used to carve for them pretty toys, and bring them delightful gifts from his journeys to the neighboring towns. It was all so different from what Jesus had expected. Surely, his own townspeople, his own family would understand.

It must have been with a heavy heart, and perhaps with glimmering hopes that he made his way that day from Nazareth to Capernaum—his face hot and flushed, his heart heavy and sore, his feet weary and uncertain, his eyes dimmed more than once with tears, that he let fall upon his dusty face when no one could see. "I might have expected it," perhaps, he said, with a trace of bitterness as he

[1] *The Abingdon Hymnal.* No. 156.

trudged along the dry and lonely road, "I might have expected it. Your neighbors and family can seldom see any good in you. They would never believe me, if I told them what I have seen and heard, and what I have felt. It is very true—'A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country.' "

Now and again his face would light up as he saw a beautiful flower, and a lovely bird, or as his eyes caught a glimpse of the waters of Galilee shimmering in the beautiful sunlight of a summer's day. Occasionally he met travelers on the way—proud, haughty Pharisees with heads erect and eyes hard and cold, little children running along the pathway, laughing and singing as they chased a butterfly, or stopped to pick a flower—always careful not to win a reproof from their parents for being boisterous on the holy Sabbath. And there were beggars too—poor, ragged, dirty—men and women and even little children who cried out for help in their misery and in their want. All this Jesus saw, and back into his face came that look of determined hope, of great desire, and he kept repeating to himself those words that he had read that morning:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor;
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

He was almost happy by the time he reached Capernaum. He could have been happy if he hadn't been so burdened with the needs of the people all about him—people who were suffering,

people who could not live if he could not help them. How great his task! He couldn't do everything alone—he had to have helpers who would be strong and loyal and unafraid. Where could he find them?

Jesus had lived all his life among the common people—those who suffered most from want and debt and disease. He understood them perhaps better than he understood the rich landowners and the politicians with whom he had had fewer contacts. He wanted to help his own people, to do everything he could to relieve their suffering. Naturally, he turned to his own people to find his helpers, and the very first men that he called to his assistance were four fishermen—Simon, Andrew, James, and John.

It may be that Jesus had known these men for a good many years, and that he had become acquainted with their sterling qualities. We are sure that he saw in these humble fishermen the kind of helpers that he needed for his work—men who could work long, hard hours and not complain, men who could endure the lack of physical comforts and luxuries, and not be dissatisfied, men who would follow their Master wherever he led, and not distrust him, or prove disloyal. These were men of iron, "Sons of thunder," Jesus called John and James, for they were strong, dependable, always ready to take up any task assigned to them.

They were fishermen, whose lives had been spent on the Sea of Galilee, catching fish and either curing them themselves or selling them to the fish-curers. Their spare time had to be spent mending their nets, making everything ready for successful fishing. That is what James and John were doing when Jesus asked them to follow him—they were mending their

nets. And when Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men," all four left their boats and went with Jesus, and this is the story as told us by Mark, one of the men who have given to the world the story of Jesus' life:

"And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway

Artist, Zimmerman

JESUS AND THE FISHERMEN

they left their nets, and followed him. And going on a little further, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending the nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him" (Mark 1. 16–20).

Four men could help Jesus very greatly in his work, especially after they had been trained, but even four men could not do everything that Jesus had for his helpers to do. He needed more men. One day as he was walking along past the "place of toll," where the people went to pay their taxes, Jesus noticed there the taxgatherer, Matthew the Levite, or Levi, as he is also called. Now, everyone hated taxgatherers—the rich because they imposed such heavy taxes, and the poor because they required taxes which in their want they could hardly pay. Taxgatherers were looked upon with distrust, suspicion, and hatred. No one could ever see any good in a taxgatherer. But Jesus did, for there must have been something about Matthew the Levite that impressed him. Maybe he was kinder than most taxgatherers; maybe he had even lifted the burden of heavy taxes from the shoulders of the poor, due to Jesus' friendship with him. There was something good and useful about Matthew, the Levite, for Jesus called him to be one of his helpers.

We do not know much about the other men, except their names and that there were seven more. Even their names are not quite certain, for one list of Jesus' disciples differs slightly from the other.[2]

[2] Luke mentions Judas, the son of James, in the place of Thaddæus, mentioned by Mark and Matthew.

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Artist, Zimmerman

JESUS AND THE FISHERMEN

they left their nets, and followed him. And going on a little further, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending the nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him" (Mark 1. 16–20).

Four men could help Jesus very greatly in his work, especially after they had been trained, but even four men could not do everything that Jesus had for his helpers to do. He needed more men. One day as he was walking along past the "place of toll," where the people went to pay their taxes, Jesus noticed there the taxgatherer, Matthew the Levite, or Levi, as he is also called. Now, everyone hated taxgatherers—the rich because they imposed such heavy taxes, and the poor because they required taxes which in their want they could hardly pay. Taxgatherers were looked upon with distrust, suspicion, and hatred. No one could ever see any good in a taxgatherer. But Jesus did, for there must have been something about Matthew the Levite that impressed him. Maybe he was kinder than most taxgatherers; maybe he had even lifted the burden of heavy taxes from the shoulders of the poor, due to Jesus' friendship with him. There was something good and useful about Matthew, the Levite, for Jesus called him to be one of his helpers.

We do not know much about the other men, except their names and that there were seven more. Even their names are not quite certain, for one list of Jesus' disciples differs slightly from the other.[2]

[2] Luke mentions Judas, the son of James, in the place of Thaddæus, mentioned by Mark and Matthew.

We do know that from all the many, many people who followed Jesus from place to place, and who listened daily to his teaching, Jesus selected seven more men to be his helpers—twelve in all. In the story of Jesus' life as told by Mark we read:

"And he goeth up into the mountain, and called unto him whom he himself would; and they went unto him. And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to cast out devils" and

Simon he surnamed Peter;
James and John, the sons of Zebedee;
Andrew
Philip
Bartholomew
Matthew (who is elsewhere called Levi)
Thomas
James, the Son of Alphæus
Thaddæus
Simon, the Cananæan
Judas Iscariot (see Mark 3. 13–19).

These are the men who became Jesus' closest friends. They lived with him, worked with him, suffered with him. Many times they misunderstood him, but that was because they were not always able to see clearly just what he was planning to do, or just why he did what he did. They grew to love him deeply, to trust him implicitly, and to serve him loyally. He depended on them to help him in his great work of leading men and women and little children into the knowledge and love of God, his Father. We shall see again and again, as we study

further into Jesus' life, the important place which these twelve men took. There must have been many other men in Galilee in those days who would gladly have left all to follow Jesus too.

"In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow thee."

—*J. G. Whittier.*

For You to Think About:

1. Read carefully again the words found in Luke 4. 16–21, then make a list of the *kinds* of *helpers* that are needed in the world to-day, if the plans which Jesus made when he was here on earth are to be carried out successfully in our modern world. Include in your list every kind of helper that you can think of.
2. How many of these names do you recognize? What has each of these men and women done to help carry out Jesus' plans for a better world? Be prepared to discuss these questions at the next class meeting:

Wilfred T. Grenfell	David Livingstone
Charles A. Lindbergh	Clara Barton
Woodrow Wilson	Florence Nightingale
Louis Pasteur	Lord Shaftesbury
William Conrad Roentgen	Abraham Lincoln
Booker T. Washington	Frances E. Willard

3. In what ways can you be one of Jesus' helpers —at home, in your school, in your treatment of other races, in your church?

CHAPTER XII

THE PATH OF DISCIPLESHIP

"He that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. . . .

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matthew 10. 38, 39, 42).

WHAT does it mean to be one of Jesus' helpers? This is a hard question for us to answer to-day, and it was much more difficult nineteen hundred years ago when Jesus called into the inner circle of his friendship those twelve uneducated, inexperienced, untrained men. What did Jesus expect of them? Let us read what we are told in Matthew's story of Jesus' life?

"Do not go among the heathen, or to any Samaritan town, but proceed instead to the lost sheep of Israel's house. And as you go about, preach and say, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!' Cure the sick, raise the dead, heal lepers, drive out demons. Give without payment, just as you received payment. Do not accept gold or silver or copper money to put in your pockets, and do not take a bag for your journey, nor two shirts, nor shoes, nor a staff, for the workman deserves his food! Whatever town or village you come to, inquire for some suitable person, and stay with him till you leave the place. And as you go into his

house wish it well. If the house deserves it, the peace you wish it will come over it, but if it does not deserve it, your blessing will come back upon yourselves. And where no one will welcome you, or listen to you, leave that house or town and shake off its very dust from your feet. . . .

"Here I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. So you must be wise like serpents and guileless like doves. But be on your guard against men, for they will give you up to their courts, and have you flogged in their synagogues, and you will be brought before governors and kings on my account, to bear your testimony before them and the heathen. But when they give you up, you must have no anxiety about how to speak or what to say, for you will be told at the very moment what you ought to say, for it is not you who will speak, it is the Spirit of your Father that will speak through you. One brother will give up another to death, and a father his child, and children will turn against their parents, and have them put to death. You will be hated by everybody on my account, but the man who holds out to the very end will be saved. . . . So do not be afraid of them. . . . Have no fear of those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. . . . You must not be afraid. . . . Whoever gains his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will gain it.

"Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes him who has sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will have the same reward as a prophet, and whoever welcomes an upright man because he is upright will have the same reward as an upright man. And no

one who will give the humblest of my disciples even a cup of cold water because he is my disciple, I tell you, can ever fail of his reward."[1]

With these instructions Jesus' band of helpers set out to do their Master's bidding—two traveling together, and charged with the task of proclaiming by word and deed, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." We can imagine the sensation they created as they came hastily into those Galilæan towns and began to preach, as if a man were to appear suddenly in his shirt sleeves, and with slippers on, riding on horseback, and shouting some important message as he dashed into a town and through its streets. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." They were to forget themselves, their own comfort, and give all they had to their great work—preaching, teaching, healing—all that they might help Jesus in his great work for a better world.

As we read carefully the task as outlined by Jesus we can't help but be thankful for the faithfulness and courage of these devoted men. As we analyze their task, we find that

1. Their work included preaching, curing the sick, raising the dead, healing the lepers, and driving out demons.

2. They could collect no fees or wages or salary, and had to depend on the hospitality of the people for food and lodging.

3. They were to go with only a very little equipment—just the clothes on their backs.

4. They were to select the most important and cordial citizen in the town or village, use his home as

[1] Matthew 10. 6–22, 26a, 28, 39–42. From *The New Testament*, An American Translation, by Edgar J. Goodspeed. Used by permission of the publishers, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

headquarters, and stay as long as they could in each place, until their work was done.

5. They were not to force themselves upon unwilling listeners. If they were unwelcome, they should move on to another place.

6. They should be on their guard, watching every word and deed lest they get into needless trouble.

7. They could expect to suffer for they would not be received by everyone. They would have to endure imprisonment and floggings.

8. They should have no fear for bodily suffering, only for those who could kill the spirit.

9. They were sure of a reward, if they were faithful, and those who took care of them would be rewarded also.

This was the task of Jesus' followers when Jesus was here on earth, and this is what it cost in those days to be one of his helpers. We know very little about the later life of Jesus' disciples except that most of them met violent deaths as a result of their being true to their Master. Tradition tells us that Peter, like Jesus, was also crucified, and that James and Philip were put to death by the sword for their part in preaching "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Paul was not one of Jesus' twelve followers, but soon after Jesus' death he became a leader of Jesus' cause among the non-Jewish peoples. He too suffered greatly, and finally was beheaded in a Roman prison. Not long before his death he wrote these words to some of his friends:

"I have been beaten three times by the Romans, I have been stoned once. I have been shipwrecked three times, a night and a day I have been adrift at sea; with very frequent journeys, in danger from

rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from the heathen, danger in the city, danger in the desert, danger at sea, danger from false brothers, through toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, through hunger and thirst, often without food, and exposed to cold. . . . So I am perfectly willing to boast of all my weakness, so that the strength of Christ may shelter me. That is why I am pleased with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties, when they are endured for Christ's sake, for it is when I am weak that I am strong."[1]

"Faith of our fathers, living still
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword,
Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word.

"Faith of our fathers, we will love
Both friend and foe in all our strife;
And preach thee, too, as love knows how
By kindly words and virtuous life.

"Faith of our fathers, we will strive
To win all nations unto thee;
And through the truth that comes from God
Mankind shall then, indeed, be free.
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to thee, till death." [2]

[1] 2 Corinthians 11. 24–27; 12. 10. From *The New Testament*, An American Translation, by Edgar J. Goodspeed. Used by permission of the publishers, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

[2] By permission of the Century Company, New York.

CHAPTER XIII

A TIME FOR TESTING AND REVIEW

No. 2

TO-DAY you are given a chance to test your knowledge of the important points connected with that period in Jesus' life when he was attempting to discover his life work and get it started.

First of all, try yourself out on this true-false test. Read each statement carefully then before those that seem to you to be *true*, place a plus (+) and before those that seem to you to be *false*, place a zero (o). Put all marks in the left margin. When your teacher gives the signal, begin.

I. TRUE-FALSE TEST. SCORE.....

1. The great majority of Palestine's population when Jesus lived was poor and frequently unemployed.
2. Nothing is told us in the Bible of Jesus' life from the time he visited Jerusalem at the age of twelve with his parents until he appeared on the banks of the Jordan to be baptized eighteen years later.
3. Jesus' family from the very first was very proud of him, and helped him greatly in his work.
4. Jesus was readily accepted by most of the people of his day as their Saviour, the Messiah for whom they had been looking.

5. At least four of Jesus' disciples were humble fishermen.
6. When Jesus was in the desert he decided the question as to how he could best help God in his work of building a better world.
7. The story of Jesus' life has been given to us in four books of the Bible—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
8. John the Baptist was one of Jesus' disciples.
9. Palestine was inhabited largely by people who had to work hard for their living.
10. Palestine in the time of Jesus was a monarchy, having its own king.
11. Jesus was a carpenter.
12. Slavery was unknown in Palestine in Jesus' time.
13. When Jesus was in the wilderness deciding what his life-work was to be, he turned stones into bread.
14. Jesus selected his disciples from the prominent, educated people of his day.
15. Jesus spent his early years in Nazareth but after he began his ministry, Capernaum became the only home that he knew.
16. Jesus came from the poor, working class of people.
17. "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country," was said by Jesus when he was driven from the synagogue in Nazareth.
18. Although Jesus himself met with a violent death, his disciples were not only permitted to carry on his work in safety, but they lived to old age before dying natural deaths.
19. Jesus' disciples were expected to work without

wages or salary, and to depend on the hospitality of the people for food and lodging.

20. Jesus' disciples numbered twelve men.

II. TEST ON MEMORY WORK. SCORE.....

Fill in the missing words or lines:

1. "Thou ....., grant us grace
   The ..... of our ..... to face;
   By loyal scorn of ....., ...,
   By ..... to meet each .....'
2. "And Jesus advanced in ..... and .....,
   and in ..... with ..... and ....."
3. "Is not this the .....?"
4. Let us, like them, without a word
   ..... and .....
5. "Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
   .....
   ..... till death."

III. TELL IN YOUR OWN WORDS

1. What Jesus discovered while in the temple talking with the doctors.....
.....
.....
.....
2. What he decided while in the desert .....
.....
.....
.....
3. What happened to him in the synagogue in Nazareth.....
.....
.....
.....

4. What kind of work he expected of his disciples

.....
.....
.....

5. The names of several men and women about whom you have heard or read, who have been Jesus' helpers too.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

CHAPTER XIV

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

ONE day a lawyer came to Jesus and asked him what he might do to obtain eternal life. Jesus answered by asking, "What do you read in the scriptures? What is written there?" To these questions the lawyer replied:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."

"Very well," said Jesus. "Do this and you shall live."

But the lawyer wasn't satisfied, so asked another question: "Who is my neighbor?" And to answer that question Jesus told a very famous story.

"A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, which both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance a certain priest was going down that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said, Take

care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee. Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10. 25–37).

What does this story mean to you? When you have finished reading it examine carefully the four statements that follow, then check the one that seems to you best to explain what this story really means:

.....1. We should never travel dangerous roads alone.
.....2. When people are hurt, we should take care of them.
.....3. Regardless of social rank we should help any person who is in need.
.....4. We should give money to help poor people.

Why did you check the statement that you did check? Now try to answer for yourself the question, *Who is my neighbor?* You may read here a list of possible answers to this question. When you have finished reading the list for the first time, check the *five* statements that seem to give the very best answer to the question according to the story which Jesus told:

My neighbor is

.....1. Anyone who lives next door.
.....2. A person of a different race.
.....3. Anyone who needs my help.
.....4. Anyone whom others don't like.
.....5. Someone who has been robbed.
.....6. A person whom others fail to notice.
.....7. Anyone who helps me.

.....8. Anyone in my school, grade or church school class.

.....9. Anyone with whom my parents permit me to associate.

.....10. Anyone who treats me well.

What further help then in this story of the good Samaritan can Jesus give you in answering this question. Find in your Bibles these passages and read them very carefully:

Matthew 7. 12. The Golden Rule.

Matthew 5. 38–42. Doing more than is asked or expected.

Matthew 5. 43–48 Love of enemies.

Matthew 25. 40 Unto the least.

In what ways did Jesus prove to be a neighbor to those in need? Write here the names of at least three stories that answer this question?

.....

.....

.....

Memorize:

"I would be friend of all—the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving, and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love and lift.[1]

[1] By Howard Arnold Walter. *The Abingdon Hymnal*, No. 114.

CHAPTER XV

FINDING GOOD IN ALL PEOPLE

"O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as others see us!"
—*Robert Burns.*

A SPEAKING contest was planned for all the eighth-grade pupils in a certain city. A great deal of interest was aroused in this event, and all the boys and girls who were to take part eagerly awaited the night when they would have a chance to represent their schools and perhaps, win a prize or at least honorable mention. Ellen —— represented the Washington School and delivered by all odds the best declamation and in the most creditable manner. She should have received first prize in the judgment of most of the people present, but she was given only honorable mention. The first prize went to a boy whom Ellen surpassed in every way; but most of the people present seemed to be satisfied, however, for Ellen was a colored girl and represented a school made up largely of Negroes. It would hardly have been proper to give first prize to a colored girl!

1. Do you think that Ellen should have had the prize? Why or why not?

2. Do you know of any examples similar to this where boys and girls of another race have failed to get their just rewards? What was done about it?

3. How would you feel in Ellen's place? Have you ever been in Ellen's place, when you were not recognized for your good work? What did you do about it?

Jack's father was in the State penitentiary, serving a term of ten years for having embezzled money in the bank where he was employed as cashier. Of course Jack was very sensitive about his father's wrongdoing, and as a result he avoided the boys of his own age, and stayed by himself most of the time. The boys came to think of him as queer. They never invited him to take part in their games or to go on their Saturday hikes. Anyway, their parents didn't want them to associate with a boy having such a father.

1. What could the boys in Jack's class or group do to make him less sensitive about his being the son of a convict? What would you do in their place?
2. Why should the boys look down upon Jack? Why should they not look down upon him?

A group of girls were organizing a club and decided to admit any other girls who could fulfill the conditions of membership. Among these conditions they stated that any girl wanting to join must

1. Be an American (no foreigners allowed).
2. Be a Protestant.
3. Know how to dance.
4. Have at least a dollar a week spending money for movies, treats, and so forth.
5. Must not be a "sap" (by that they meant that they wanted only girls that knew how to have fun, that wouldn't have to ask permission of their parents

for everything they did, that wouldn't be afraid to cheat, or even "play hookey" from school. They wanted *regular* girls)

6. Must be athletic.

7. Must be able to attend meetings, also movies, after the evening meal.

These seven conditions represent the ideas of several different girls, and were written down just as they were expressed.

1. What do you think of them as conditions for membership in a club? What do you think of 1 and 2 especially, and of 5?

2. Would you be eligible for membership? What conditions could you meet? Not meet?

3. Would you care to belong to such a club? Why, or why not?

4. What kinds of girls would be kept from joining such a club, for the reason that they couldn't meet all the conditions of membership?

The problem of *finding good* in others is as old as the race. There have always been those who have felt *above* their fellows—better in many ways. People have been looked down upon for many reasons because

1. They were poor.

2. They couldn't afford lovely clothes or attractive homes.

3. They lacked education.

4. They came from a different race—"niggers," "chinks," "dagoes," "sheenies," "bohunks."

5. Their skin was of a different color.

6. Their fathers were laboring men—miners, farmers, day laborers.

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THE PHARISEE AND THE TAXGATHERER

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5. Their skin was of a different color.

6. Their fathers were laboring men—miners, farmers, day laborers.

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THE PHARISEE AND THE TAXGATHERER

7. Some member of the family had been in disgrace.

8. They themselves had been in disgrace.

9. They belonged to a different church, believed in different creeds.

10. They lived on a back street, or in a neighborhood with a bad reputation.

How many more reasons can you give? How many times have you looked down upon someone in your school, or among your acquaintances for one or more of these reasons? What reasons especially? Have you ever been looked down upon for some one or more of these reasons? What did you do about it?

Jesus refused to be a "snob." (That is the name we give to people who find it difficult to see good in others, usually because they think so highly of themselves.) He was often criticized for associating with people who had unwholesome reputations. Read in your Bibles Matthew 9. 10–13, an incident when the Pharisees criticized Jesus for eating with publicans (taxgatherers) and sinners. This spirit on the part of the Pharisees must have made Jesus unhappy, and perhaps a little disgusted with the pious superiority of this group of people, for one day he told this very daring story:

"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get. But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven,

but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner. I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18. 10–14).

There are many other incidents in the life of Jesus that show us clearly that he knew how to find good in all people, that he accepted them for what they were, not for what they seemed to be. Would you like to find some of these incidents and read them for yourself:

Mark 2. 13–14. Jesus chose a despised tax-gatherer to be one of his helpers.

Mark 2. 15–17. Jesus ate with publicans and sinners.

Mark 14. 3–8a. Jesus anointed by a woman with costly ointment.

Memorize:

"Pass no more judgments upon other people, so that you may not have judgment passed upon you. . . . Why do you keep looking at the speck in your brother's eye, and pay no attention to the beam that is in your own? . . . First get the beam out of your own eye, and then you can see to get the speck out of your brother's eye" (Matthew 7. 1, 3, 5).[1]

[1] From *The New Testament*, An American Translation, by Edgar J. Goodspeed. Used by permission of the publishers, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

CHAPTER XVI

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

It's the Way You Say It[1]

"What is he anyway?"

"He's a Wop."

"Aw, who ever heard of a yella-haired Wop? He's a Polecat."

"Naw, he's a Dutchy."

"Anyway, he ain't one of us."

A little boy sat huddled up before his desk. Oh, he understood well enough! Wop, Dutchy, Polecat—they were strange names on strange tongues, but when you're called names in any language—well, you know it. He was ashamed. He was ashamed of his tow head and his odd breeches. He was ashamed of his words. They didn't come right.

Once he had been proud. That was the day he had first come to school.

"Allo," he said, and he smiled. The little boy at whom he smiled, said nothing. He merely dug his hands into his pockets and stared.

"I come to dis school—new boy. My name Peter."

Suddenly the other little boy went off like a firecracker.

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[1] From *Peacemakers.* Used by permission of the publishers, *The National Council* Department of Religious Education. Protestant Episcopal Church, New York.

"Hey! Hey! Hey, you fellas!" he yelled. "Come look at it. Its name is Peter."

Peter was not proud now. He sat still at his desk. He did not want to be noticed. No, above all else in the world he did not want other little boys to notice him. By flattening his plump little body against the back of his seat he could usually be ignored; but not at the reading lesson. No, not then.

"Peter, your turn now."

Peter stood. His cheeks burned. He knew that every boy in the room had looked up and winked at his special friend. That wink meant, and well Peter knew it, "Now for the fun!"

"Dere vas vunce a leetle boy—"

Snickers from the delighted little classmates! A severe look from the teacher.

"Order! Now again, Peter. Not 'dere'—'there' —th-th-there."

"T-t-t'ere," repeated Peter, hopelessly.

A gulp from one little boy on the back seat, amused beyond even the fear of the teacher.

"Maybe you had better sit down, Peter," the teacher said. "He really is stupid," she thought. "I don't know what to do about it."

And Peter would look hard at his book and hold back the hot, dimming tears.

Ah, but arithmetic! Numbers—they were the same in this foreign world as they were back home. Shining rows of them waiting to be put together, waiting to be summed up or multiplied or divided, waiting to be made into answers. When the queer, half-familiar words of his reading lesson blurred before his eyes he sought shelter in his battered red

arithmetic. Of course he was afraid to hold his hand up to tell the answer. But he knew it. He had it all written down on his paper. He knew it, and he was right!

It was late one afternoon. Peter had been kept in. He was kept in to practice the sound of the English "th." There was another boy kept in too. He sat behind Peter. Peter was very much ashamed to be sitting there practicing sounds.

"T-t-" he said, hopelessly and monotonously. He felt it was very silly.

The teacher left the room a minute.

"T-t-," he went on monotonously, when suddenly he heard a sniffle behind him. Yes, there it came again and it sounded suspiciously like a sob. Peter turned cautiously in his seat. There sure enough was Bob—Bob, an American boy—with his head down over his arithmetic, and his shoulders were shaking.

Peter stopped his "t's" abruptly.

"Vat is matter?" he asked.

Bob raised his head and looked at Peter, defiantly. Then he sobbed again.

"I can't get it," he said. "It won't never come right."

"Numbers?"

"Arithmetic."

"Maybe you don't get first part right," Peter suggested. "You don't get first part right, all rest no good."

He put out his hand for the paper and looked at it.

"You don't get first part right like I said. You come here. I tell you how to do it."

Bob slid into Peter's seat.

Funny thing—here was a little foreigner, a Wop, or a Polecat, or a Dutchy, or something, who could do arithmetic better than he, Bob.

"It's like a puzzle, see?" Peter's voice was high with eagerness. "And you find the way out."

"Gee," said Bob, carried away by admiration. "I thought you was a dummy."

Why are some voices crisp and sharp, and why do some teachers make you jump?

"Well, what is this?" The teacher had come in without making a sound.

"Peter, he was helpin' me see what this problem was about," Bob exclaimed.

"And did he?"

"Yes'm."

"He must be very good, then," she said, dryly.

"Yes'm, he is. There is nothing he don't know about numbers. He says they're like a puzzle—you got to find the way out. Problems sound good the way he explains them."

The teacher looked keenly at Peter for a moment.

"You like arithmetic, then, Peter?"

"Yes, I like numbers better than all."

"But you never hold your hand up to recite."

"No," said Peter, in a deprecatory voice. "But you know I don't speak so goot."

"The kids laugh—that's why," explained Bob out of a new wisdom. "But he knows—Peter! He knows."

"I see," said the teacher.

Bob and Peter left the schoolroom together.

"Say, wanta come over to Macky's and play ball?"

Peter's eyes shone.

"Maybe dey wouldn't like me to come," he suggested timidly.

"Sure they'd like you to come. They don't know nuthin, those boys. They think all Wops is dumb—see? Well, they'll get over that when they know you."

"Who ever heard," said Peter softly, "of a yella-haired Wop?"

"Well, what are you—a Dutchy? You don't mind being called a Dutchy, do you?"

"It isn't vat you call me by," explained Peter happily. "It's joost de vay you say it."

The two boys turned off toward Mack's ball field; and neither knew how wise they had become.

For You to Think About:

1. How should a follower of Jesus behave—
   (1) When someone "fouls" him in a game?
   (2) When a "foreigner" sits next to him in school?
   (3) When someone takes his rubbers on a rainy day?
   (4) When his younger brother destroys a highly prized toy or book?
   (5) When someone he dislikes wants to join his club?
   (6) When someone tries to pick a fight with him?
   (7) When he has a chance to do a kindness for someone who has wronged him?
   (8) When he discovers that someone has played an unkind "trick" on him?
2. What did Jesus say that would help you to answer these questions? Find these verses in your Bible:
   (1) Matthew 7. 1. On judging others.

(2) Matthew 7. 12. The Golden Rule.
(3) Matthew 5. 38–39. Turning the other cheek.
(4) Matthew 5. 40–43. Doing more than is expected.
(5) Matthew 5. 43–45. Loving your enemies.

3. Read also Matthew 5. 46–47. Do these verses mean that
(1) We should be kind only to the people we know?
(2) We should be kind only to the people that are kind to us?
(3) .....
(4) .....

CHAPTER XVII

TEACHING HOW TO SHARE

"Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare."

It was a truly beautiful day. The sun seemed to be rising out of the Sea of Galilee, and there was a path of gold sparkling across the blue waters. Red lilies made splashes of color among the green grasses. From high above the fields there came the lilting melody of a lark, and the sparrows flitting about kept up a continuous happy prattle. In his tiny upper room a boy was dressing hurriedly, making ready for a day's outing in the country.

"Son," his mother had said the night before, "to-morrow is thy birthday, and I shall let thee do whatever thou dost wish all the day. I only ask that thou dost get into no mischief."

He had gone to bed filled with happy anticipation. Suddenly he had thought of the wonderful stories he had heard the men in the neighborhood tell of him whom they called Jesus of Nazareth: how he had healed a blind man, how he had even brought back to life a girl whom everyone had believed to be dead, and how kind and gentle he was with the children.

"Perhaps, mother," he had suggested, as he chattered through his breakfast, "perhaps I might go north along the lake and find Jesus of Nazareth. Neighbor Timothy said that he and his disciples were near Bethsaida yesterday."

And his mother, as she watched him swinging sturdily along the shore, hurrying eagerly toward the north, his package of lunch under his arm, said a little prayer to the God of her fathers that her son might be kept safe through the day, and that he might see the wonder-working Man from Nazareth.

Along the beach hastened the boy. The way to Bethsaida was long, and the sun had already dried the dew from the grass. Now he stopped just for a moment to watch a gull dip down into the water, but after that he hurried on again twice as fast.

"What's that?" he said suddenly to himself. "It sounds like many people talking together." He left the sandy shore of the lake, and walked through the lilies until he could see the road. "Why, it's crowded with people—and what can it mean? Many of them are lame. There's a man carrying a little girl—Oh, they too have heard about Jesus of Nazareth and they are going to find him!"

With a word of greeting to a friend here and there in the group, he sped on, and soon he was near the front of the procession. As they went, people joined them from every side, and sometimes they overtook cripples, lame or blind, or so sick that they had to lie down by the side of the road to rest.

"There he is!" came the cry. "There is Jesus of Nazareth! Hail, Master!" and loving friends urged on the weary ones whose illnesses had made them lag behind. "Jesus of Nazareth is ahead just a little way and he will cure you!"

Swift as an arrow went the boy toward the crowd, in the midst of which he knew he would find Jesus. Wriggling about among the people, sliding through openings that seemed hardly large enough to let

him through, around men wasted with illness and lying on pallets, past women whose pain-racked faces wore a new look of hope, clear up to the front rank of people he made his way. And then he saw Jesus!

Tall he was, and straight as the noblest cedar of Lebanon. His face, tanned by the hot suns of the desert, was more gentle even than that of the boy's own mother as she had cared for him when he had been ill. "How strong he must be!" enviously thought the lad, looking at the strong muscles of Jesus' arms, and then he remembered that back in Nazareth Jesus had been a carpenter.

"If he would only speak to me!" wished the boy, and started to push his way nearer to the Master. But just then he saw a little girl who was so lame she could barely walk and who was struggling forward to reach the healer. So the lad stepped back to make room for her. Hardly could he believe his eyes when he saw her turn, after the Master had taken her in his arms and touched the crippled leg, and firmly as the lad himself, go back into the crowd where her sister was waiting for her. She didn't even walk the whole distance, for, delighted by the new feeling of strength and eager to see what she could, she covered part of the way with a hop, a skip, and a jump!

So it went all day; and Jesus taught them wonderful things and healed many who were sick. Once there came a man who for years had been sick in his mind—"possessed of demons," they called it then. With a word Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to leave his victim, and now that man was going about in the crowd, helping those who were

too ill to make way by themselves, to a place near the Master.

It seemed as though hardly an hour could have passed when the disciples, glancing toward the west, where the sun was sinking in a blaze of crimson and orange, said, "Master, let us send the people away, for the evening has come, and they have had nothing to eat for hours."

But Jesus answered them, "They have no need to go away; give ye them to eat."

"Why, Master," they had answered, "we cannot feed them, for we have no food, and there are five thousand men here who must be fed."

"Search ye," the Master said, "and bring what food ye can find."

Straight toward the boy came Andrew, one of Jesus' followers. "Lad, what have ye there?" he said, pointing to the little package of lunch.

"Only five barley loaves and two fishes," answered the boy quickly, "but the Master may have them all."

Close beside Andrew the lad moved. After Jesus had blessed the bread, the lad heard him say, "Give to all the people who are here, and if any food is left, gather up the fragments."

Soon the disciples were back. "Everyone hath had his fill, Master," they said, "and here is what was left over." And they placed before Jesus twelve baskets filled with broken pieces!

And then we can imagine that the wonderful thing for which the lad had been wishing all day, but for which he had hardly dared hope, happened! Perhaps a strong hand was laid on his shoulder, and in his ear he heard the voice of the Master,

deep and sweet as the low tones of the temple harps:

"My lad, blessed shalt thou be forever, for in giving thy loaves and thy fishes thou hast helped me in my work to-day."[1]

For You to Think About:

1. What do you recall from an earlier story about the clothes worn by Jews who spent most of their time in the out-of-doors and away from home? Did they carry food with them on their travels? Is it possible that many who were present at the time of this story might have been provided with food?
2. Which would have been the greater feat on Jesus' part—to multiply five loaves and two fishes into enough food to feed five thousand people, or to get those who had brought their own food to share with those who had not? Give reasons for your answer.
3. What part did the lad play in this incident? Did he provide the food for the entire group, or did he stand as an example of sharing? Give your reasons.
4. Now read the two selections from your Bible—
   John 6. 5–14. Jesus feeding the multitude.
   Matthew 25. 34–40. Unto the least.
   (1) Explain in your own words the meaning of Matthew 25. 40. How are we helping Jesus in his work when
      (a) We give money to the American Red Cross?

[1] From *Knights of Service*, by Emerson O. Bradshaw. Reprinted by permission of The Abingdon Press. (The original title of this story was "The Boy Who Became a Friend of Jesus.")

(b) We put money in the Salvation Army kettles at Christmas time?
(c) We subscribe regularly to the church?
(d) We run errands for older people?
(e) We are kind to dumb animals?
(f) We do anything to help some one else.

(2) Which is easier to share money, toys and other things that belong to us, or to *share ourselves?* What does it mean to *share ourselves?*

Memorize:

"Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me" (Matthew 25. 40).

"O Master, let me walk with thee,
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me thy secret, help me bear
The strain of toil; the fret of care.

"Teach me thy patience; still with thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong."

—*Washington Gladden.*

CHAPTER XVIII

HELPING THE HANDICAPPED

So rapidly did the news spread that Jesus and his disciples were eager and willing to help all who were in need that they soon found themselves burdened with more work than they could do. They toiled night and day, and grew weary, very weary with the strain of constant devotion to their task. So one warm Sabbath day Jesus and two of his disciples, James and John, decided to find rest and quiet in the home of their friend, Simon.

As they walked along the narrow, dusty streets in Capernaum they talked of what had been happening in the week just past, and of the joys of their new work, for James and John were two fishermen whom Jesus had only recently called to be his helpers. Especially did they discuss the incidents that took place that morning in the synagogue.

"Good Master, you were wonderful this morning. Your words rang out like a mighty challenge—'I have come to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,' " said James.

And John: "But most wonderful of all, good Master, was the way you helped that poor maniac. When he shouted, 'What have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth?' you just looked at him steadily and then in your quiet way said, 'Hold thy peace.' It was wonderful to see the change in that man. He grew quiet and calm. He stopped shouting those

vile things at you, and even the people were impressed. O good Master, tell us—will we ever be able to do the works that you do?"

"Yes, my faithful friends, even greater works." And then they walked on in silence. They were thinking of the service that day in the synagogue when Jesus had read from the holy writings, and when he had healed a man with a troubled mind.

As they walked along the townspeople noticed them, and there could be heard the quiet murmur of voices as friend passed on to friend that Jesus was walking along the street. Even little children recognized him. They loved his kind face, and his voice was soft and mellow like the tones of the Temple bells.

When they reached their destination, the home of Simon and Andrew, Simon greeted them warmly and then brought water to wash his guests' feet, but he seemed so worried that he hardly knew what he was doing, and then he said:

"Master, my wife's mother is ill. She has a high fever. We've done everything for her. She has tried all sorts of remedies, but she gets no better. She's even worse. Can you help her?"

Jesus could see the sick woman lying on a mat on the floor. She was hot and uncomfortable, and, most of all, she was discouraged. She could never get well. And when she saw Jesus coming, she probably said: "What good can he possibly do me? I've tried everything."

But when she saw his face, and when his strong hand took hold of hers, she felt different. She could see that he was strong, healthy, kind; he was sorry for her; he wanted to help her; she believed then that he could. They probably talked together

Artist, William Hole

A SABBATH EVENING IN CAPERNAUM

for a few minutes, and, no doubt, Jesus made her very proud, when he told her of the very great help Simon and Andrew were giving him in his work. Then he stooped over, grasped her hand more firmly, telling her to rise from her bed, and before very long she was on her feet, her dizziness had left her and her face began to take on a more natural color. She even felt able to help prepare and serve the family meal. How happy she must have been that Jesus had come into her home that day!

By that time news had spread throughout the city that Jesus was resting at the home of Simon and Andrew, and from all quarters they came, so that by evening the house, the yard, the street in front, and even the roof thronged with people. All the sick that were able to walk came, and those that could not walk were brought by friends. Such a company—the lame, blind, deaf, dumb, people with fever, with palsy, with diseases that could not be named. There were even insane people who had been brought by friends. And lepers lingered on the edge of the crowd shouting their monotonous warning, "Unclean, unclean!"

When Jesus saw them he was deeply moved. He could feel their suffering and he was eager to help them. As he walked through the crowd he smiled a warm, encouraging smile to the afflicted, laid his hands upon them, spoke words of cheer and comfort, and shared with all who came the blessings of health that he possessed. How happy he must have been that night, when the last person had left, and as he lay out under the warm Galilæan sky, that he had been able to bring cheer and comfort and happiness to so many people that day.

For You to Think About:

1. Who are the sharers of health in your neighborhood? What do they do to help those that are physically handicapped?
2. What organizations or institutions in your neighborhood devote themselves to sharing health? What can you tell your class about their work and influence?
3. What have the following persons done to share health?

   Louis Pasteur
   John C. Roentgen
   Wilfred T. Grenfell
   Dr. Charles Mayo
   Clara Barton
   Florence Nightingale
   Madame Curie

4. What can you do to share health? Read the verses at the end of this chapter. Do you know any unsanitary place where disease germs lurk that you might clean up? What else can you do?
5. Read Mark 2. 1–5.

Read Carefully and Memorize:

"Where cross the crowded ways of life,
  Where sound the cries of race and clan,
Above the noise of selfish strife,
  We hear thy voice, O Son of man!

"O Master, from the mountain side
  Make haste to heal these hearts of pain,
Among these restless throngs abide,
  Oh tread the city's streets again,

"Till sons of men shall learn thy love
  And follow where thy feet have trod;
Till, glorious from thy heaven above,
  Shall come the city of our God."

—*Frank Mason North.*

CHAPTER XIX

TO WHOM SHALL WE PRAY?

FROM your earliest childhood you have prayed, sometimes prayers that you have memorized and sometimes prayers that you have made up. You have been taught that one of the important duties of a follower of Jesus is to pray—regularly, often, sincerely. What kind of prayers have you prayed? Almost every boy and girl knows this prayer:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

Have you not always said a prayer of thanks before eating your meals? Perhaps, you know this:

"We thank thee, Lord, for all this food.
We pray thee, Lord, to make us good.
For Jesus' sake. Amen."

Perhaps you have often sung your prayers as in that old hymn which even your father and mother knew when they were children:

"Father, we thank thee for the night
And for the blessed morning light."

It may be that you learned early in life to make up your prayers, and to call upon God when you were in some special need:

"I have been unkind to-day, O God, please forgive me."

"Help me to be kind to my father and mother to-day, and not to be saucy."

"Help me pass this test in arithmetic this morning."

"Take care of me during this thunderstorm, and don't let the lightning strike our house."

"Protect us from burglars to-night."

"I am so happy to-day. I thank you, God, for everything that you have given me, especially for my new skates, my bicycle, and these new books."

What do you think that *praying* really is? Have you often wished that you knew how to pray better than you do? Have you always received answers to your prayers? These are a few of the questions that we are going to try to answer now. One day a group of Jesus' disciples came upon him when he was talking to God, his Father. They noticed the beautiful look on his face and the confident tone of his voice. They longed to possess what he had, and they exclaimed, "Lord, teach us how to pray."

In answer to that request Jesus said: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (Matthew 6. 9-13.)

Jesus knew how to pray. He prayed not only with his lips but with his life. He *lived* his prayers. We shall study Jesus at prayer, and hope that we too may learn how to pray by following his example.

What Is God Like?

Jesus answered this question when he began his prayer by saying, "Our Father." We pray to God. But how do you think of God? Several boys and girls no older than you were asked this question and these are a few of their answers:

1. God is an old man with a white beard, and dressed in white robes sitting up in the sky, just out of sight.

2. God is like a great airship floating through the heavens. He goes everywhere, knows everything, and sees what we do.

3. God is like my father. He gives me everything I need and most of the things I ask for.

4. God is like a very wonderful man, only more powerful. He can do everything.

5. "God is love" (He had learned that verse in Sunday school).

6. God rules the whole world—even the birds and the animals. He tells everyone what to do; and if you don't do what God tells you, you are punished.

7. God created the world.

8. God is kind and good. Sometimes he gets angry and then punishes people that do wrong. That is why we have earthquakes and floods and wars.

9. God gives us everything.

10. God is a Spirit, so my Sunday-school teacher says. But I don't know what that means.

Can you find your own idea of God in that list of ten? Do you think that any one of those statements tells exactly what God is like? Which one? What ones give very incorrect ideas of God, according to

your own idea? We still must ask the question, "What is God like?"

Our answer to this question is very important, for we pray to God, and we make up our prayers according to the way we think of God. In order that you may understand the full meaning of this statement, ask yourself a few questions:

How may we come to know God? One of the boys whose idea of God is included in No. 2 of the list you just read, thinks of God as an airplane floating through the sky. Where did he get that idea? Another (No. 1) thinks of God as an old man with flowing white beard and robes. How did he come to think of God in that way? Still another (No. 8) thinks of God who appears only occasionally and then in catastrophes in order that he might punish the bad people. Where did he get that idea? You have certain ways of thinking about God and you may well ask yourself that question about your own ideas: Where did you get them? Let us read further and see whether or not we can come more nearly to a right way of thinking about God?

John Discovers God in the Out-of-Doors

John loved the out-of-doors. He spent his Saturdays going on hikes and his summers in a boys' camp. He enjoyed watching birds—the way they built their nests and cared for their young; he reveled in the mysteries of the woods—the different kinds of trees and flowers, the places where woodchucks and squirrels made their homes. One day he saw a hole in the large stump of an old tree and he discovered in it the home of some little bear

cubs. He enjoyed watching snakes too, and when he found out about their characteristics and manners he was no longer afraid of them. At least he knew what to expect from the kinds of snakes that lived in the woods that he visited most often. At night he often lay on the ground and looked up at the starry heavens. He found out all he could about the planets; he could locate the big dipper, the Milky Way, the various planets. He stopped often to look at a gorgeous sunset, and many times he thought the sunrise was even more wonderful. Trees and flowers, wind and rain, snow and ice, birds and animals, sun, moon, and stars. These were his friends. He saw in the world certain great facts that could not be contradicted:

(1) His world was beautiful. There was beauty even in what some people might consider hideous.

(2) His world followed certain laws that governed the seasons, the habits of animals, in fact, all of nature.

(3) His world provided for the needs of its creatures, if they only could learn how to take care of themselves.

You can imagine that John had difficulty understanding ideas of God such as you have just read. He thought of God as the *Ruler of all Nature, The Creator of his world.*

John could sing with feeling the songs, "This is My Father's World," and "For the Beauty of the Earth," for he had learned to find God in the out-of-doors. He understood

"The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament showeth his handiwork"
(Psalm 19. 1).

Jerry Finds God at Home

Jerry's father and mother were perfect—so far as Jerry could see. Their one thought seemed to be to make their home happy, and to do good things for their young son. One day Jerry came home from Sunday school quite excited and asked, "Mother, why does God hate foreigners?"

"Hate foreigners?" exclaimed his mother, in astonishment.

"Yes, hate foreigners," repeated Jerry.

"Why, Jerry, God doesn't hate foreigners. Where on earth did you get such an idea?"

"Well, I guess I'm sort of mixed up, but in our Sunday-school class to-day we were talking about the people that God loves. Our teacher told us that God loves those that keep his commandments, and that if we don't keep his commandments he doesn't love us. I didn't get much of that, but when Jack Smith asked the teacher if that was why the dagoes and hunkies down by the railroad were so poor and dirty, the teacher said 'Yes.' Does God love us, mother, more than he loves them?"

Jerry's mother could see that her son was all mixed up, even as he said, so she tried to untangle him with a few questions:

"Jerry, do you really think that God hates anyone?"

"Well, I don't know, mother. Some people seem to have more than others. Look at us—we have a nice house and a car, and I have a bicycle. A lot of kids don't have everything as nice as this. Is it because God loves some kids and not some others? That would be a funny kind of a God, wouldn't it?

You couldn't trust him, could you? Gee, I hope God loves us for sure—I'd hate to live like those hunkies do."

Jerry's mother didn't interrupt him as he talked, but when he finished she asked another question:

"Why do you think that God loves us more than he loves the people who live down by the railroad?"

"Because we have more than they have," was the quick reply.

"Do you think that God shows his love by showering things on certain people and taking things away or keeping them from others?" she asked.

"Well, as I said, that would be a funny kind of a God, wouldn't it? Especially if you happened to be the people he didn't give things to," answered Jerry.

"I'm afraid, Jerry, that you think of God too much as you think of Santa Claus. If you're good, he'll fill your stockings with presents. If you're bad, he'll leave them empty, or else fill them with ashes and a switch. Do you think that God is like that, Jerry?"

"I hope not, mother. I might forget to be good, and dad might lose his job, and then we'd have to live down among the hunkies too. I wouldn't like that kind of a God; and, besides, I'd be afraid of him. Wouldn't you? Tell me, mother, what do you think God is like?"

"That's a hard question, son, and I'm not sure that I can give you the right answer, but I'll try. I don't think that God has much to do with the things we have. I don't think that God has given us this comfortable home and those foreigners the huts they live in. I'm not sure that he has given us our automobile either, or any of the other things that we have."

"But where did they come from if God didn't give them to us?" asked Jerry, in bewilderment.

"Your father and I have worked hard, Jerry, for everything we have. And before I even knew your father he went to school for years and years to learn how to be an engineer. Then he started working, and now he has a good position with a comfortable salary. We have saved and planned, and helped each other. We have done everything we knew how to do to keep you well and strong and to make you happy."

"Then there isn't any God at all?" asked Jerry.

"Not a Santa Claus God, Jerry," she answered, "but a God more wonderful than all the things in the world. God hasn't given us these things that we enjoy, but he has given us two wonderful gifts—this world that we live in, and a chance to live in it. Whether or not we live happily in this world depends upon the use we make of this chance."

"Even so," added Jerry, "God hasn't given those hunkies as much as we have. They haven't any chance. Maybe that's what's the matter with them."

"You're right, Jerry," she continued. "They haven't any chance. Their chance has been taken away from them. If God loves any one less than he loves others, it is those people who have stolen their chance. What they need, Jerry, is the chance to learn, the chance to keep clean and healthy and strong, the chance to be the very best they can possibly be. Hundreds of them have found their chance, and used it wisely, bringing happiness to themselves and to others. Have you ever read the story of Jacob Riis, or of Mary Antin? If you

haven't, you must do so soon, for you will see how these two people found and used their chance."

"It must be tough to be a hunkie or a wop, mother," said Jerry, reflectively.

"That all depends, Jerry. I can think of ways to help them so that they might be happier."

"How, mother?" he asked, eagerly.

"For one thing, Jerry, stop calling them hunkies and wops. Get acquainted with them. Find out how interesting they really are. Give them a chance to play in your games. Stop laughing at them when they make mistakes in reading, or when they come to school shabbily dressed. Oh, there are lots of things that you can do, Jerry, and then you'll be helping them to have their chance"—and she added, "to love your God."

"Mother, you're wonderful. I still think that God loves me more than the other kids, for none of them has a mother like you."

And as he went out the door to the tune of a carefree whistle, Jerry's mother felt God very near.

God Is Like Jesus

Jesus discovered God and came to know him best in the daily round of activities that made up his very busy and unselfish life. He lived and worked among people who suffered for the lack of things to make their lives happy and comfortable, among people who found it difficult to understand the thought of God as a loving, helping, protecting Father. They would never have come to know such a God, if they had not known Jesus, who lived with them at all times a godlike life.

You have heard and read stories of Jesus' help-

fulness—how he shared his strength, his courage, his very life with the people he met. He gave them new life, he showed them new ways of seeing and hearing the beautiful things of their world, he helped them to overcome their fears and to be calm in the face of danger.

One day toward the end of his life Jesus fell to talking with his disciples concerning their work after he should leave them. Thomas, one of the twelve, was always a little less to be depended upon than the others, for he was timid, overcautious, lacking in the spirit of adventure. We are not surprised to hear him say:

"Master, we are all at sea. Where are we going? What are you planning to do? Where are you leading us?"

And Jesus answered, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Meaning that he was their guide and that they had only to follow him, for he added, "No one comes to the Father, but by me."

Then Philip, also in doubt, said, "Show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied."

That statement must have hurt Jesus, for what had he been doing during all the weeks and months that they had been together? But he added, simply, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

And then he asked: "Why have you asked me to show you the Father? What more can I do than I have done already. God dwells in me. Through him I have been able to work. And, more than that, you may do even greater work than I have done, if God dwells in you."

CHAPTER XX

FOR WHAT SHALL WE PRAY?

FOR what do you pray? If you are like most people, you pray whenever you need or want something to make you happy and comfortable, or to keep you from being unhappy and uncomfortable. When a certain group of boys and girls was asked this question, they showed in their answers that they prayed for just about everything under the sun, including these:

New clothes.

That some member of the family seriously ill might recover.

A motorcycle.

Money for some special occasion.

To escape punishment for some wrongdoing, such as telling a lie, or breaking a window, or cheating in a test.

To pass a test.

To be *good;* that is, to get through the day without getting into trouble with anyone, and without being punished.

To possess something found desirable in another —such as pretty hair, attractive clothes, or a toy.

Can you guess what idea of God those boys and girls had? God was thought of as a kind of magician who could perform marvelous feats, usually after every human resource had been exhausted. For example:

Mary prayed for new clothes as though they grew on bushes. She knew that she could have nothing more than her parents were able to afford, and that she had already had her share. Yet she continued to pray for new clothes.

Jack prayed for a motorcycle, even though he knew that his father would never permit him to have one. Jack knew also that every other possession had come to him from his parents or other relatives. He had no reason for thinking that he would get a motorcycle in any other way.

Whenever he was to have a test, Ted always prayed and prayed that he would pass. He needed all the help that he could get, for he was lazy and careless in his studies. Why should he expect God to supply in some miraculous way the knowledge that he was supposed to have in order to pass the test?

Jim was what the neighbors and his teachers called a "bad" boy. He was always getting into trouble. He formed the habit of lying out of his misdeeds, and he confessed to a habit of praying for protection whenever his parents or teachers found out about his bad conduct.

Norine was inclined to be envious. She seldom saw a girl with pretty hair or eyes, or wearing attractive clothes, but what she wished that she might have those things. She added strength to her wishes by praying often for curls, for long eye lashes, for pretty clothes.

Surely not all people pray in this manner, but unless we learn differently, we are apt to think of *prayer as a way of getting things that we are unable to get through natural means, as a way of getting things*

that might be withheld from us if we didn't pray. In other words, we pray for *things*. Do you think that we should pray for *things?* Why, or why not? If we do pray for *things*, how shall we pray? By words addressed to a Santa-Claus God who is also like a magician or by an effort of our own to get the things that we should have, and that we need?

Just suppose that you want something, such as new clothes, money for a special reason—a book or a toy. How are you going to get it? In most cases the answer is simple: *From your parents.* They get you what they think you need and what they can afford. They may even make it possible for you to earn the money to help get the things that seem best for you to have. They have been intrusted with your care. They are helping God in his work by taking the best possible care of you that they are capable of. Of course, if they fail to realize the importance of their task, and their part in God's world, they may make you unhappy by keeping from you the things that you should have, or by giving you more than is good for you. It is their sacred duty to God, and to you, to learn how best to provide for your needs in order that you may always be happy and unselfish in your enjoyment of God's world.

Are you happy only when you have every *thing* that you want? If this is true, then Jesus must have been a very unhappy boy, and even more unhappy as a man, for he had very little. As a boy he lived in a mud house, slept on the floor, ate coarse food, worked hard. And when he became a man he said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath

not where to lay his head." When he was asked by one of his followers why he did not take a greater interest in such things as food and clothes, he said, "My meat (my food) is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." When he noticed how the people of his day worried about food and clothes, he said to them: "Do not worry about such things: what you shall eat or wear. Life is more than food and clothes. All your worrying will profit you nothing. You can't change your condition by worrying. But seek first the kingdom of God and do good, then all things will be added unto you" (Paraphrase of Matthew 6. 25ff.).

Now, suppose that you are in some serious trouble: you have to take a test for which you are unprepared, you dash across the street in the face of a red traffic light and run the risk of being hit by an automobile, you go in bathing without knowing how to swim, you are unkind to someone and hurt his feelings. For what shall you pray? For each of these cases mentioned the answer is quite simple. First:

Always see to it that you study your lessons from day to day so that you will always be prepared for a test.

Learn to obey the traffic signals.

Learn to swim in a protected tank or bathing beach before risking your life at the beach or in a river.

Try always to be kind to and thoughtful of other people; but if you should offend, do not be slow to apologize.

It is rather unfair to God, isn't it, to call upon him only when we have gotten ourselves into some great difficulty? Have you ever heard of the great

magician, Houdini? Perhaps you have seen him. You will recall that he became famous for the miraculous feats which he performed—getting himself out of a strait-jacket, releasing himself from a sealed casket under water, and many other such stunts. Many people think of God as a great magician, a super-Houdini, who is just waiting to get us out of "scrapes" that we have deliberately gotten ourselves into.

For what, then, shall we pray?—We must answer this question according to our idea of God. Jesus said, "When you pray, say 'Our Father!' " It must have been quite easy for Jesus to think of God as Father when he remembered his own father. Concerning God as Father, Jesus said:

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matthew 7. 11).

"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Matthew 6. 8b).

That is to say, we live in God's world. He created it. He rules it. He keeps it going. He is like a mighty power or engine working at the heart of his world according to rules—we call these rules natural laws. When we learn these laws, and learn to cooperate with them, we are happiest. Everything in this world happens as a result of some kind of law, and God is in the law. *He is the law.* We pray in order that we may discover God and work with him. We are unhappy when we fail to recognize God, and work against him.

Jesus thought of God not only as the loving, helping, protecting Father, he recognized God as

the final law of life. We find him praying to the God of law in two of his great prayers: (1) "*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.*" He prayed that he might learn how to work with God, and show others how to work with God in the building of a godlike world; (2) "*Nevertheless not my will but thine be done.*" On the very last night of his life on earth Jesus prayed this prayer, for he could not be untrue to God in that final hour. No matter how much he dreaded whatever was to happen the next day, he could not ask God to prevent what must inevitably happen. He had to pray, "Not *my* will, but *thy* will be done."

In the spirit of Jesus and after his example we too must pray in order to know and do God's will rather than to escape God's will.

1. Instead of praying for *things*, try to understand whether or not we should have these things. If we should have them, then we should discover the natural and best way to get them.

2. If we get into trouble, we should try to understand how we get there, and then find the way out according to the best that we can discover concerning God's will for our lives.

3. If we have done wrong, we should admit it, and then, with God's help, try to make amends.

CHAPTER XXI

LIVING OUR PRAYERS—WORKING WITH GOD

In the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples are two short sentences that often are said much too lightly, hardly as though they were taken seriously: *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.* Perhaps Jesus meant that God would build his kingdom and have his will done on earth through his own power. That is, God could say to the white race: "Love your black brothers. Be kind to them, and give them a chance to be as happy and useful as possible." And the white race would immediately love the black race, and as a result all race bitterness and hatred would die out.

He might say to a boy or girl: "Be honest. Tell the truth. Do not cheat in games or in tests." And that boy or girl from then on would be honest and trustworthy in all things.

He might say to the nations of the world: "Let there be peace. Let there be no more wars. Love your enemies. Give up strife and pursue peace." And from that moment forth wars would cease, armies and navies would be done away with, and men everywhere would live in peace with their neighbors. But is this what Jesus meant in that prayer?

As we study the life of Jesus, we are led to believe that Jesus meant to show his followers that *they*

must help God answer their prayers. He told them many things to do, and taught them many simple rules of life to follow; but more even than these, he lived his life as one earnest, self-forgetting prayer. He prayed with his lips: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done." And he prayed with his life in such a way that his followers could see in him a perfect example of absolute devotion to the will and plan of God.

How well we put this into practice may be seen in our prayers. For example, Eleanor often told her grandmother how much she loved her, and at night she seldom failed to pray, "God bless grandmother." But what do you think she did when she was asked to run an errand for her grandmother? She grumbled and growled and was almost always quite disagreeable about it. How could God possibly bless Eleanor's grandmother without Eleanor's help?

Alfred hated English and, of course, neglected it. Night after night he asked God to help him with his English. How could God help Alfred when Alfred was unwilling to help himself?

Nan decided when only eleven or twelve that she was going to be a missionary when she grew up. She often prayed that God would help her to keep true to her pledge. But Nan was often very unpleasant to persons that she did not especially care for. She made fun of one of the girls in her grade who stuttered, she referred to certain people as "niggers" and "dagoes," and at home she frequently was saucy to her parents. How could Nan prepare in her childhood to be a successful missionary? How could she expect to be useful in God's world?

What is the best way to get results from prayers? We cannot answer that question completely, but we can think of a few answers that should be helpful:

1. Be sure that you pray for something that is possible in God's world, ruled by certain laws.

2. Be sure that you do everything in your power to help God answer your prayer.

God has given us certain powers to use in order that we might be happy and useful in his world. It is our duty to use these powers wisely. Do you recall one of Jesus' stories that shows how true this is? You may read it in Matthew 25. 14–29:

"For it is as when a man, going into another country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several abilities; and he went on his journey.

"Straightway he that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents. In like manner, he also that received the two gained other two. But he that received the one went away and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money.

"Now after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and maketh a reckoning with them. And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: lo, I have gained other five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

"And he also that received the two talents came and said; Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two

talents: lo, I have gained other two talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

"And he also that had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter: and I was afraid, and went away and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast thine own. But his lord answered and said unto him . . . Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath the ten talents."

"If our love were but more simple,
We should take God at his word;
And our lives would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

—*Frederick W. Faber.*

CHAPTER XXII

LEARNING TO TALK WITH GOD

JESUS grew up among a very religious people. Every phase of Hebrew life was bound up in religious ideals and governed by religious laws. God was very real to his people and was concerned with everything that was said and done. Eating and sleeping, planting and harvesting, buying and selling, marrying and burying, the smallest details to the greatest experiences of life were centered in the religious ideals of the people. Rich and poor alike called upon God when in need of his help, the rich thanking God that they were better than the poor, and the poor begging God to deliver them from their misery.

One day Jesus happened to be talking with a group of people who were bragging and boasting about their own goodness, and criticizing and running down people whom they considered inferior to themselves. Being somewhat displeased, and even hurt, Jesus said:

"You remind me of two men who went into the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican.

"The Pharisee walked proudly past the publican and stood with head erect and hands outstretched before God as he prayed in a loud voice: 'God, I thank thee that I am different from other men, that I am not like those who steal and rob. I thank thee that I am better than that publican I passed coming in here. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get to thee.'

"But the publican seemed very sad and ashamed. He didn't so much as raise his head, but he just kept beating his breast and crying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner.' "

And then Jesus added, "For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," meaning that those who boast and brag shall be "taken down," as we say, and those who appear to be no more than they really are shall win greater favor from their friends in the long run.

How, then, shall we talk to God? How shall we address God in our prayers? After reading Chapter XIX, "To Whom Shall We Pray?" you should be able to answer this question. You have often heard prayers that seemed to make God so strange and far away. One can hardly understand what is meant when God is addressed as "O thou Infinite and Eternal One." Jesus answered our question very well when he said, "When you pray, say, 'Father.' " Calling God "Father" brings him close to us. We feel that he is interested in us. We know that he will help us. Some address their prayer to God, saying, "O God" or "O God, our Father," and that helps them to think of God as great, as the ruler of his world, as the center of life itself. There are no rules to follow in addressing your prayer to God except this: use any form that makes God real to you, and that makes it easy for you to feel God's nearness and helpfulness.

For what shall we pray? In Chapter XX we asked this question, and you probably discovered its answer in the discussions that you had with your teacher and your classmates. Spoken prayers are

likely to be careless, poorly thought out, and quite meaningless. You have heard some persons pray for "everything under the sun." It seems best to pray for one thing at a time, to include in your prayer just one central thought made clear to yourself and to God. Have you noticed the prayers that occur in your book? Read those found in this book and see whether or not they are true to this rule.

Above all things, your prayers should be carefully worded, free from mistakes in grammar and free from words improperly used. A prayer is like a beautiful poem or a lovely composition. Plan it carefully, express it in the best words that you can think of, address it to God reverently, sincerely, and with the feeling that God will hear.

Why do we bow our heads and close our eyes when we pray? Do you think that this is always necessary? Suppose you are by a beautiful lake and seeing a gorgeous sunset, you are moved to pray. Would you have to close your eyes before you can pray? Many rules have grown up in regard to how we should act during certain kinds of religious exercises, and many people strain so hard to follow all these rules that they forget the very spirit lying back of them. Some kneel when they pray, others stand erect, or even walk, and still others sit quietly. The old Hebrews used to stand with hands outstretched, palms upward; the Mohammedans lie prostrate on the ground, rising to their knees and raising their hands over their heads whenever the name "Allah," meaning "God," is used in their prayers. Catholics pray with a rosary and Hindus use a prayer wheel But these are only forms—they are not prayer.

Jesus must have thought a great deal about the people who were religious just for a show in public, for this is what he said about them:

"When you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, for they like to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the squares, to let people see them. I tell you, that is the only reward they will get! But when you pray, go into your own room, and shut the door, and pray to your Father who is unseen, and your Father who sees what is secret will reward you. And when you pray, do not repeat empty phrases as the heathen do, for they imagine that their prayers will be heard if they use words enough. You must not be like them. For God, who is your Father, knows what you need before you ask him. . . . When you fast, do not put on a gloomy look, like the hypocrites, for they neglect their personal appearance to let people see that they are fasting. I tell you, that is all the reward they will get. But when you fast, perfume your hair and wash your face, so that no one may see that you are fasting, except your Father who is unseen, and your Father who sees what is secret, will reward you."[1]

For You to Do:

Join with your class in writing a prayer. You will be given a chance to talk this over with your teacher. Now see what a fine prayer you can produce. In all your prayers try to follow the suggestions offered here, for then you will enjoy prayer more than you have before, and you will derive great help from it.

[1] Matthew 6. 5–9, 16–18. Quoted from *The New Testament*, an American Translation, by Dr. Edgar G. Goodspeed. Used by permission of the University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

CHAPTER XXIII

SEEKING AND FINDING HAPPINESS

BE not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold, the birds of the heaven, they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. . . . Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6. 25–26, 28–29, 33).

All was silent in the great hall of the Prince's palace, except for the soft-footed servants who were hurrying about making last-minute preparations for the Prince's dinner.

"Let us hope that the Prince is happier to-day," whispered one to another.

"And that he does not snarl and growl at us, as he did yesterday," came a muffled response.

"Let us not think too harshly of him," said one of the old servants. "For forty years I have served in this household. I knew the Prince's father, and well I remember the Prince when he was but a little lad. Ah, what a fine lad! . . ."

"That may all be true," from a younger servant. "Maybe he was a fine lad, but that does not excuse his treatment of us. We're not dogs, that he should treat us so."

"There, there, my good friend," spoke the older servant. "Don't be too hard on the Prince. I know him well. I've watched him grow up; I've loved him as though he were my own son."

"You're too soft-hearted." "I couldn't love that man." "Who are you, a servant, to say that you love your master?" But in spite of all these comments from his fellow servants the old man continued:

"I know why our master has seemed to treat us unkindly. He's unhappy, terribly unhappy. He hates all this show, all the rules that he has to follow. He is bored with everything, and because we're here and can't protest, he takes it out on us. Do you know, my friends, I'm going to talk to him? I'm going to tell him about Jesus, the Galilæan."

"S-h-h"—from all the servants. "Do you want to be thrown into jail? Do you want to get us all in trouble?"

And they all appeared to be busier than ever—adjusting a silken pillow here or a tapestry there, and arranging the flowers, the fruit and the dishes so that everything would be most pleasing to their master. At the mention of Jesus' name they grew afraid, and all but the old servant became gravely silent. He kept on talking:

"I'm going to tell him about Jesus," he repeated. "Of how Jesus has gone up and down the shores of Galilee helping those in need, bringing new life and hope to the discouraged and downtrodden. I'll tell him that I once heard the Galilæan say—and how wonderful his words were!—'Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . . and all things will be added unto you.' I'll tell him what I have seen with my own eyes: the lame walk, the blind see, the deaf hear; and I'll

make him happy when I tell him about Jesus and the children—how he took them up in his arms and fondled them. The Prince would love Jesus!"

The other servants stopped working to listen. Fear left them and in its place there came a longing to see Jesus too, and to hear him as their old friend had seen and heard him. So engrossed were they that they were startled when they heard—

"Who is it that I would love, my faithful servant?"

As one man all the servants looked in the direction from which the voice had come, and there, standing before the curtains hung over the entrance to the hall, stood their master, the Prince. They would have been afraid to be caught talking about him had they not seen the eager look in his eye. They bowed low and then made ready to serve his meal.

"Tell me, faithful servant, who is it that I would love?" he repeated.

What a handsome man he was!—tall, straight, dressed in the richly colored robes of the Orient, and wearing about his neck and on his hands and arms the costly jewels of a man of wealth. His face shone with a new light and his eyes beamed with some new adventure, as the old servant told him all he knew of Jesus, the Galilæan.

"Where shall I find him? Bring my sandals and my cloak. Where did you see him last?"

And he was off to find the Galilæan, stopping in the market place to inquire first of a rug merchant, then of a silversmith, and even of the beggars that he saw loitering there. "I am looking for the Galilæan. Has he been here to-day? Has anyone seen the Galilæan?"

Hardly waiting for an answer to his questions,

he hurried on to the Sea of Galilee, his rapid footsteps stirring up clouds of dust. Men and women stood aside and little children, even dogs, scuttled under cover to get out of the Prince's way.

"I must find the Galilæan," he kept saying. "Surely he can help me find happiness. I have tried to be faithful to the God of my fathers, but I find no pleasure in so doing. What more can I do? Where shall I go? How may I find the happiness that my heart longs for? Why haven't I sought this man before?" And then with a faint smile: "What would my father say, what would the elders in the Temple think if they knew that I sought Jesus—that I had listened to stories about him from one of my servants?"

But then he turned the corner, and there in the distance he saw a group of people. He hurried on, for he was sure that he had found the Galilæan. Such a crowd! What people! Men and women who looked hungry, but not for food, little children who seemed to be afraid until they caught Jesus' warm smile and then remembered that he had invited them to come to hear him too; and beggars—the Prince thought that he had never seen so many beggars, half-clothed, starved-looking, dirty, and yet with a look of longing and hope in their eyes. There were the sick and lame too; some had dragged their weary, painracked bodies there, while others had been brought by friends or relatives. All sought Jesus, the Man of Galilee, and hoped for new life as they listened to his wonderful words and felt his kind hand on their heads and saw the light of new life in his eyes.

Then Jesus saw the Prince. He couldn't help

seeing the Prince, for there was none in all that company so richly dressed or so strikingly in earnest as was this Prince, who, pushing his way through the crowd, fell down on his knees and sobbed:

"Good Master, tell me, what can I do to be happy? Nothing satisfies me any longer. I'm most miserable."

"Why do you call me good," Jesus responded, "and ask me what to do? Only God is good, and you know what he has commanded you to do. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother. Love your neighbor as yourself."

"O Master," replied the young man, "I have done all those things. I have kept these commandments ever since I was a child. Is there nothing more that I can do?"

Jesus knew that the Prince meant what he had said, for he could see in his eye a real desire to do the right and to achieve the very best in life. But Jesus also noticed the young man's costly garments and his heavy gold ornaments.

"Could you give all this up?" asked Jesus aloud, and to himself he said: "I am afraid this young man thinks too much of clothes and jewels and food—the things that money can buy. I wonder if he would be willing to give up everything in order to help his fellows." And then Jesus repeated his question, "Could you give all this up? All your riches and jewels and bodily comforts?"

"What do you mean, good Master?" asked the Prince in amazement. "What do you mean? Could I give up my riches, my jewels, my comforts?"

"Just this, young man. There is only one thing

for you to do. Use your money to help others. Sell all that you own—your houses and lands, your jewels—everything—and give your money to the poor. Come then, and follow me, and you shall find your greatest happiness in helping others."

The young man rose to his feet. He couldn't believe what Jesus had told him, nor did he quite understand, except that Jesus was asking him to do some very impossible thing. He had never dreamed that Jesus would expect him to give up everything and serve others! He would be a poor man like all the others in the company of Jesus' followers. That would be hard. He could not do it.

As he turned away he could feel Jesus' eyes fairly burning into his back. He wanted to say some last word to the Master. He wanted to hear again the Master's voice—perhaps he would show him an easier road to happiness. But no word was spoken, and we may hope that as the Prince walked slowly back to his palace with dragging feet and heavy heart, he said to himself: "If I could only do it! I shall pray unceasingly for the strength to do as Jesus said, then shall I too be worthy to be one of his followers."

For You to Think About:

1. Why was the Prince unhappy? What more than he had did he want? How did he expect that Jesus would help him?
2. What do you think of the advice that Jesus gave him? Do you think that Jesus really wanted the Prince to become poor before he could be one of his followers? If not, what did Jesus really want?
3. Is being rich a blessing or a curse? Give your

reasons. In what ways can being rich be a blessing? be a curse? Can you give any examples?

4. Think of certain definite ways in which this Prince might have helped Jesus in his work? How could he have gained his own happiness in this way?
5. How may rich people to-day help Jesus in his work? hinder Jesus in his work? Can you give any examples?
6. Read the verse, and then in the spaces below check the statement that seems to you to give most clearly the meaning:

   For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life? (Matthew 16. 26).

   ..... 1. A man should gain all the wealth he possibly can.

   ..... 2. A man's life is of much more value than the whole world.

   ..... 3. Great riches always bring unhappiness.

   ..... 4. When a man gains great wealth, he loses his life.

A Prayer

O God, we thank thee for the stories of Jesus and his great work. Help us as we read and study them to discover in them something that will make us more useful followers of Jesus. May we be willing at all times to forget ourselves, to give up our selfish desires and habits, so that nothing will prevent us from doing our full share of work in the building of a better and happier world. Amen.

CHAPTER XXIV

A TIME FOR TESTING AND REVIEW

No. 3

TEST NO. I

What Do These Sayings of Jesus Mean to You?

Directions.—Read with great care each of the following sayings of Jesus, then check *one* of the statements under the saying that seems to you to give the meaning most clearly, as shown in the *sample.*

Sample: "*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,*" means—

.....1. Treat other people as they treat you.
.....2. Never do any more for anyone than is asked of you.
..X..3. Always treat other people as you like to be treated.
.....4. Always expect some reward for your good turns.

1. "*Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you,*" means—

.....1. We should love only our enemies.
.....2. We should be kind and loving, even to our enemies.
.....3. It is harder to love those that hate us than those that like us.
.....4. We should be good only to those that hate us.

2. "*Judge not, that you be not judged,*" means—
.....1. If we find fault with others, we must expect that they will find fault with us.
.....2. There is good in all people.
.....3. It is easy to pick flaws with others.
.....4. Don't criticize others, lest they criticize you.
3. "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,*" means—
.....1. Jesus and God are the same person.
.....2. God is like Jesus.
.....3. We can see God by looking at pictures of Jesus.
.....4. Jesus looked like his Father.
4. "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,*" means—
.....1. We should love the people who live next door to us.
.....2. We should think as highly of everyone as we think of ourselves.
.....3. It is enough, if we love only those who are nearest us.
.....4. We should love only those who live near us.
5. "*Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple,*" means—
.....1. Jesus' followers must carry a cross.
.....2. Jesus' followers are expected to endure hardships.
.....3. Jesus' followers must be willing to follow his example in all things, even though they may be called upon to suffer.
.....4. Jesus' followers are happiest when they are suffering for his cause.
6. "*Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these least, ye did it unto me,*" means—

.....1. We should be kind to little children.
.....2. Everything we do helps Jesus.
.....3. Being kind and serving others helps to promote Jesus' work.
.....4. We should do things for Jesus.

7. "*Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors,*" means—
.....1. We should pay back any money that we owe.
.....2. If we want to be forgiven, we must be ready to forgive those that wrong us.
.....3. It is necessary to forgive only those that ask us.
.....4. We may be forgiven by asking for it.

8. "*Freely ye received, freely give,*" means—
.....1. We should give only if we have plenty for ourselves.
.....2. We should give only after we have been given something that we want.
.....3. We should show our gratitude for what has been given us by sharing it with others.
.....4. We are given things to give away.

9. "*For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?*" means—
.....1. A man shall gain all the wealth he possibly can.
.....2. A man's life is of much greater value than the whole world.
.....3. Great riches always bring unhappiness.
.....4. When a man gains great wealth he loses his life.

10. "*He that humbleth himself shall be exalted,*" means—

.....1. You will be more highly thought of, if you do not boast and brag.
.....2. We should tell other people of our faults.
.....3. We should show others how good we are.
.....4. Those who boast and brag are usually disliked.

TEST NO. II

What Should a Follower of Jesus Do?

Directions.—Here are a number of situations that any boy or girl might find himself or herself in. When you have read the statements carefully, check the *best* answer to each question.

What Should a Follower of Jesus Do—

1. *When he is unable to answer a certain question on a test?*
.....1. Pray to God for help in recalling the answer?
.....2. Copy the answer from a friend?
.....3. Leave the question blank?
2. *When he fails his test?*
.....1. Blame the teacher for asking unfair questions?
.....2. Resolve to study harder?
.....3. Decide to come prepared to cheat in the next test?
3. *When he discovers that he has been given too much change by a street-car conductor?*
.....1. Return the extra amount to the conductor?
.....2. Put the extra money in his bank?
.....3. Spend the extra money for candy?
4. *When he finds a Negro boy sitting next to him in school?*

.....1. Ask the teacher to change either his seat or the Negro's?
.....2. Pay no attention to the Negro?
.....3. Make friends with the Negro?

5. *When someone "fouls" him in a game?*
.....1. Become angry and try to get even with this person?
.....2. Pay no attention to it?
.....3. Report it to the coach or director?

6. *When the teacher, through mistake, marks his test paper too high?*
.....1. Say nothing about it?
.....2. Tell the teacher of his mistake?
.....3. Make fun of the teacher for making such a mistake?

7. *When the boy or girl who sits next to him in school needs paper?*
.....1. Offer to share his?
.....2. Hide his extra paper?
.....3. Offer to lend some in exchange for a favor?

8. *When he gets sick from eating green apples?*
.....1. Pray to God to make him well?
.....2. Decide never again to eat green apples?
.....3. Be angry at God for letting the green apples make him sick?

9. *When he is asked by a friend whether or not he goes to Sunday school?*
.....1. Answer proudly that he goes?
.....2. Answer that he goes, but with a feeling of embarrassment?
.....3. Lie about it, and say that he does not go?

10. *When the boys in his class carve their initials on the school furniture?*
.....1. Join them in carving his own initials?

.....2. Tell them that they ought not to destroy property that does not belong to them?

.....3. Pay no attention to it?

When do you have the greatest difficulty to be a true follower of Jesus? When is it most difficult to do as you think Jesus would do, if he were in your place? When you have thought these questions over very carefully, and discussed them with your teacher, write your answers here.

(1).....

(2).....

(3).....

(4).....

(5).....

A Prayer

O God, help me to be true to the teachings of Jesus. I admire him for his courage and his bravery, and because he always stood for the right, even when it was dangerous for him to do so. Help me, I pray, to learn to follow Jesus' example every day so that I may be happy in making other people happy. Amen.

CHAPTER XXV

WHO SHALL BE THE FIRST?

DURING the weeks and months that they worked and lived together Jesus and his disciples became devoted companions. At times Jesus might have grown discouraged and disheartened if it hadn't been for the vigor and loyalty of the twelve men who made up his inner circle of friends. No doubt he grew to know some of these men better than others and to depend upon certain ones for work that needed to be done with the greatest care. They were all so different, that it must have taxed Jesus' wisdom more than once to know just how to deal with them. There was Peter, strong and loyal, yet hot-headed, always a little inclined to rush into things. Thomas was a faithful follower but not easily led, for he had to be "shown," he had to know just how every plan was going to work out before he would yield himself to it. Judas, one of the younger men, was impatient; he wanted Jesus to establish a kingdom and place him in an important position. He was willing to serve his Master, but he hoped that in the end he would reap some personal reward. Jesus must have suspected him from the very first of being just a little less trustworthy than the rest.

The most discouraging thing about these men must have been their stupidity—if that word is not too harsh. There were times when Jesus' heart

must have bled when he realized how little they really understood what he was doing, or the goals toward which he was working. They had heard him tell his matchless stories—about the good Samaritan and the prodigal son. They had marveled as he helped the sick, the lame, the blind, the deaf. They had heard him argue with the Pharisees. They had seen his face and heard his voice when he prayed. They had watched his life—pure, unselfish, devoted to his task, the very dwelling place of God. And yet they failed to understand him!

Toward the end of Jesus' life he was constantly harassed by his enemies—those strong religious leaders who called him a blasphemer, and desired to put him out of their way. Jesus knew that they would accomplish their purpose sooner or later, so he felt that he had to make some provision for his work, should he have to leave it unfinished. He had only his disciples to depend on, so he did everything he could to train them for their work. They went everywhere with him and formed a sort of bodyguard, though Jesus was never afraid of anyone who could harm his body.

Then the time came for him to make his last journey to Jerusalem, and these twelve men tried to urge him not to go, for they knew that it would surely mean his death, and possibly theirs too, for Jesus had told them just what he was expecting.

"We must go to Jerusalem, good friends!" Jesus said, "and it is necessary that we go through Samaria too. There are many who have not heard the gospel."

"But, good Master," they argued, "it is sure death for you, and even for us, to go to Jerusalem. Surely,

you have heard how you have been criticized and condemned by the priests. Once in the Province of Judæa, and our lives are in great danger, for even on suspicion we could be haled before the Sanhedrin. Oh, good Master, must you go to Jerusalem? Let us tarry here. Let us not be in haste."

"Yes, my face is set steadfastly toward Jerusalem. We must hurry, if we would be there in time for the Passover. Have I not told you? Do not be afraid of those who kill the body. Fear only those who try to kill the soul. Let us make ready for our journey."

The twelve said nothing more to Jesus, but they could hardly suppress their fears, and among themselves they murmured. Jesus knew how they felt. He could see that they were afraid. He loved them for their thought concerning his safety, but he could not heed their warnings. He felt called to Jerusalem, for there was work to be done, so he led the way, with his helpers following after him.

On the way they fell to talking among themselves about what might happen to them should they be left without a leader, and some of them were so stupid as to think that Jesus might in some miraculous way declare his power and establish over night a great kingdom on earth. They would like that!

"Teacher," said James and John, those two strong sons of Zebedee whom Jesus nicknamed the Sons of Thunder, "will you do something for us—anything that we ask you to do?"

"What is it that you want me to do?" answered Jesus.

And quickly before their courage left them, they said: "Will you give us important places in this new

kingdom that you are about to establish? Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left."

Jesus must have looked at them in amazement when he said:

"You don't know what you are asking. Do you understand what my kingdom is like? I am afraid you don't, or you would never ask such a thing of me. It is not mine to say who is to occupy the important places in my kingdom. Anyway, are you able to go through with what I am facing? Can you endure suffering, even to losing your life for what you believe?"

By that time the others, who had overheard the conversation, became very much annoyed at James and John and began to take them to task for what they had asked of Jesus. But Jesus, fearing that perhaps the entire group had misunderstood, called them to him that they might talk it over.

"You seem to think that I am going to establish a monarchy in Jerusalem, that I am to be proclaimed king, and rule all the people. You should know better than that. What have I done in these months that we have been together to lead you to think that I would ever be king, and lord it over the people as the Gentiles do? Have I been with you all these months, for you to understand so little of what I have been trying to do?"

We can imagine that those twelve men, and especially the Sons of Thunder, must have been embarrassed, especially when he continued:

"No, I'm not going to be king, and you will never have a chance to be my prime ministers. Ours is a humble task. We become great only as we forget ourselves and serve other people. Whosoever would

become great among you, shall be your minister, and whosoever would be first among you, shall be the servant of all, for even I came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give my life, if need be, to save my people."

For You to Think About:

1. What makes one really great?
   (1) Having money?
   (2) Being elected President of the United States?
   (3) Being a minister of a church?
   (4) Being principal of a school?
   (5) Having a fine home?
   (6) .....?
   (7) .....?
   (8) .....?
2. According to these five items, would Jesus be considered a *great* man? Why, or why not? What makes Jesus really great?
3. Read in your Bibles Mark 10. 44–45. Can you name any persons in your own city or town, or whom you have met in your reading, that could be considered great according to Jesus' law of service? What about Abraham Lincoln? John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Florence Nightingale?
4. Read also Matthew 25. 34–40. In these verses Jesus tells us how we may make him happy by helping other people. Learn by heart the fortieth verse.

CHAPTER XXVI

HOSANNA TO THE KING!

On to Jerusalem trudged Jesus and his disciples, the latter filled with fear as to what might happen to them there, yet driven on by a force that they could not resist. The disciples could only follow their Master when they saw his face, set like flint toward the Holy City. What would happen to them there? Would they be received in a friendly way? Would they be arrested and thrown into jail?

The highways were crowded with other pilgrims bound for Jerusalem, for this was the Passover season, and all who could, journeyed to Jerusalem to share in the religious services. As Jesus and his disciples walked along, great crowds of people thronged about them, for who hadn't heard of Jesus and his great works? "It is Jesus, the Nazarene," was heard on all sides, and from every direction they came to greet him. Even the sick, the lame, and the blind came that he might help them. By the time they reached the city of Jericho, the news of their coming having traveled before them, the streets were filled with hundreds of people eager to see Jesus.

There lived in that city a taxgatherer named Zacchæus, short and wiry, a man whom most of the people disliked, for he charged such heavy taxes. He had become a rich and prosperous man. He had heard of Jesus. Perhaps he knew of Matthew,

the Galilæan taxgatherer, whom Jesus had called to be one of the twelve. He wanted to see Jesus, but he was so small and short that he couldn't possibly elbow his way through the crowd that thronged the streets of that city. Not to be thwarted, he climbed a tree, from which he thought he could surely see Jesus.

He must have looked very strange—that little man among the branches and leaves of the sycamore tree. No doubt Jesus and his followers laughed to see him hanging on. But could anyone have been more surprised than Zacchæus, when he saw Jesus come to the foot of the tree and say, "Zacchæus, come down, for I want to spend the night in your house"?

Zacchæus slid down the tree as fast as he could, his face fairly glowing with pride. "How happy I am to receive you, you and your followers," he said. And they went to the home of Zacchæus.

"See, he has gone to spend the night with a sinner. Who is Zacchæus that Jesus and his followers should stay with him—Zacchæus, a robber and a very wicked man?" Then the crowd of onlookers murmured among themselves.

Zacchæus neglected nothing in providing for Jesus and his disciples. He entertained them with the best that his money could provide, but something in the face of Jesus made him uneasy. Jesus' presence in his house took away all his joy in his comfortable furniture, his fine clothes, and his rich foods. When he could stand it no longer, he arose to his feet and said:

"Good Master, I am a man of wealth, but I'll give half of everything I own to the poor. And if

I have gotten any of my wealth dishonestly, by taxing the people too heavily, I'll restore to them four times what I have taken."

And Jesus answered, "To-day salvation has come to this house."

Early the next morning Jesus and the twelve were on their way to Jerusalem, for they still had many miles to cover. As they trudged along they talked about their work, the things that they had seen and heard since they had been together. They dreaded going to Jerusalem. They were afraid.

The last few miles made quite a climb and when they reached the Mount of Olives, they stopped in the shade to rest. Then Jesus called two of his disciples—very likely Peter and John—and said to them: "Go into the village near here and find a young colt. Untie him and bring him to me. If anyone asks you where you are taking him, just say that I need him."

In just a little while they came back with a colt, and after they had made a saddle out of their cloaks, Jesus mounted him, and they started on their way to Jerusalem. As they drew near the Holy City they could see that it was buzzing with all the excitement of Passover week. Pilgrims were coming from all directions. The narrow streets were fairly jammed with people and even animals. Above the din could be heard the shrieks of peddlers and the clanging of bells.

What a curious sight the Galilæans must have made—Jesus seated on a colt, his disciples walking cloakless beside him. Everyone knew that it was Jesus, for it had been rumored that he was coming, so when he appeared the shout resounded from street

to street, shop to shop, porch to porch, and even into the courts of the Temple:

"Hail, to the King. Jesus, the Messiah, the Promised One. Hosanna! Hosanna!" Like wildfire the news spread, and hardly had Jesus entered the city before hundreds came to acclaim him. Flowers and palm branches were strewn in his pathway, garments were thrown into the streets for his colt to walk upon. On every hand were shouts of praise and adoration: "Hail to the King! Hail to Jesus, the Nazarene, the Messiah!"

On into the city they went, the crowd gathering numbers and fervor. "Surely he will ride in armor, on a fiery horse," some said. You can imagine their surprise and disappointment when they saw him riding only a colt. "Can this be the Messiah?" they asked.

"Oh, yes, this is the Messiah, the Holy One of Israel. He comes not as a warrior, not as a king in armor, but as a servant of the people. Have you not heard of his good works?"

"But how can he save the people? How can he lift the yoke of Roman bondage from our shoulders? What can he do—a carpenter, a Galilæan, a Nazarene? He can't be the promised one of Israel?" The doubtful ones began to say, somewhat scornfully.

"Look at his face. Watch him as he stoops down to fondle a little child. Hear him as he talks to God, our Father. Surely he is the Christ. His kingdom is not made with hands. It is built on deeds of love and kindness. It lies within the hearts of men. How can you doubt that he is the Promised One? Surely he has shown us the Father.

Clearly has he given us an example: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself.' All hail, Jesus the Promised One!"

So Jesus rode that day nineteen hundred years ago into the city of Jerusalem. He came as he had lived—humbly, sincerely, and without show. He began that day a march of triumph that has been felt in the lives of millions in the centuries that have followed. "Hail! Jesus of Nazareth. Hail, Christ of the centuries."

For You to Think About:

1. Do you suppose that Jesus fully understood at the time of his temptation just what the next two or three years would bring to him? Do you suppose that Jesus' disciples fully realized what risks and dangers being followers of Jesus would really bring them to? Give reasons for your answers.
2. Why did these twelve men have difficulty understanding Jesus' purpose for his work? His reason for going to Jerusalem?
3. How may a follower of Jesus to-day practice the law of service? Read the following list and check the ones that seem to you to explain the meaning of this law most clearly:

To become great we must (check the best ways)

.....Decide to become ministers or missionaries when we grow up.

.....Not always want to be "it" or the head of everything.

.....Seek employment as maids, or servants when we grow up.

.....Try to stand high in our school subjects so that we will be recognized and rewarded.

.....Not lord it over our weaker friends, such as younger brothers and sisters or pupils in our grade who do not get as high marks as we do.

.....Win our position of leadership by working honestly for it.

.....Help other people at all times, especially those in trouble and need.

4. Read Mark 10. 35–45.

Memorize: Mark 10. 44–45.

CHAPTER XXVII

CLEANSING GOD'S HOUSE

THROUGH the streets of the Holy City to the Temple courts proceeded the Galilæans and their followers. Fear had almost left the twelve, for they had not dreamed of such a greeting in Jerusalem. Jesus, their Master, had been proclaimed as King, as the Promised One of Israel—they were glad to be disciples.

What a sight, the Temple courts! They looked more like a market place than a place of worship. Hundreds of merchants swarmed about unpacking and shouting their wares. On all sides were crates of doves, herds of lambs and sheep tied together, and vessels to be used during the Passover. The money-changers were on hand too, for it was their business to exchange the foreign money into the coinage of the Temple. Every one of the merchants and money-changers seemed to be there to rob the people, for on every hand were bitter arguments and even fist-fights—someone was being charged too much for a lamb or a pair of doves, someone else had been given short change, and others had been sold impure animals or injured birds. Such confusion! Such noise! The pilgrims could hardly be blamed for protesting, for they had saved every penny with great care in order to make their annual trip to the Holy City. They could not bear to be robbed.

Jesus saw all this. He had seen it whenever he had come to the Passover. He remembered the first time that he saw it many years ago in his first trip to Jerusalem. Those words still rang in his ears:

"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. . . . But let judgment roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

That night he spent in Bethany with friends. He probably couldn't afford the expensive lodgings in Jerusalem, so, like many others, he and his disciples had made arrangements to spend their nights out of the city. Away from the din and mockery of the Temple courts, Jesus had time to rest and think. The next morning saw him early in Jerusalem, and he went straight to the Temple. As he looked upon its white and golden splendor, and heard above the noise in the courts its deep-toned bells, he gained strength to carry out the decision made the night before, lying out under the warm and friendly Judæan sky.

With fire in his eyes and iron-like determination in his walk, he went quickly to the tables of the money-changers and tipped them over in the midst of the energetic arm-waving and tongue-wagging of the money-changers. Then he took a whip, which he had brought for that purpose, and drove the animals out of the courts. What a fluttering of frightened doves and bleating of frightened sheep! What an indignation among the merchants! But Jesus would not be cowed by their threats. He stuck to his task until the Temple courts were cleared of every trace of buying and selling.

And this is not all that he did. The Temple stood in the center of the city and covered such a large area that the townspeople had formed the habit of making a short-cut through its courts from one side of the city to the other. And Jesus decided to put a stop to that too, so he stationed a disciple at each entrance leading to the short-cut, and whenever anyone tried to enter or leave, carrying wares which they had bought or which they wanted to sell, they too were driven out.

Jesus had determined to purify his Father's house, and above the storms of indignation and protest from all sides, his voice could be heard: "Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers."

For You to Think About:

1. What would Jesus think of certain things that he might see in churches to-day?
   (1) Initials carved on the piano and chairs by boys' classes.
   (2) Pictures drawn in the hymn books, and poetry (sometimes with vulgar words and meanings) written in the hymn book or in study books.
   (3) "Jazz" songs and "jazz orchestras" found in some Sunday schools.
   (4) Ugly pictures, illustrating his own life in ways that he would scarcely recognize.
   (5) Dirty and unsanitary conditions.
2. Is your church a house of prayer? Why, or why not? Do you feel "reverent" when you enter it, while you are in it? Why, or why not? Is your church a house of prayer for all

nations? Would a Negro be welcome in it? Would a Jew feel at home there? Why, or why not?

3. What could you do to make your church a more friendly place? A more beautiful place? A house of prayer?

CHAPTER XXVIII

IN TROUBLE WITH TEMPLE OFFICIALS

YESTERDAY proclaimed king! To-day hounded by threats of destruction! To-morrow—what? So ran swiftly the first few hours of Jesus' stay in Jerusalem. His outburst in the Temple courts filled the head priests with alarm. They often disagreed and fought among themselves about differences in belief, but when their very offices were threatened they became afraid of revolution, and more than that they feared losing their influence among the people, so they stood together as one man.

This man, Jesus, was dangerous. He was a radical. He should be put out of the way. They had to plan carefully though, for Jesus had a great many friends in Jerusalem. Had not hundreds shouted hosannas to him only the day before? When they met together for the first time to discuss ways and means of getting rid of Jesus they were afraid to make too drastic plans, but just appointed a committee to investigate this dangerous character.

The next day Jesus was seen walking around in the Temple courts, probably seeing to it that his orders of the day before were being carried out. Many people flocked about him, and others quite in awe of him stood aloof. Most of them had heard of his having cleansed the Temple the day before, and many had even seen him as he did it. Suddenly he was accosted by a group of distinguished

gentlemen—priests, scribes, and members of the Sanhedrin.

"By what authority did you do the things that you did here yesterday? Who told you to drive the merchants and the money-changers out of the Temple courts?" they asked.

Jesus saw at once that they were hoping to catch him, so he answered with a counter-question which he hoped that they couldn't answer: "You answer my question and I will answer yours. Was my baptism by John the Baptist from men or was it from heaven?"

As Jesus expected, they were stuck by that question and they whispered among themselves: "If we say, 'From heaven,' then he will say, 'Why then, don't you believe me?' If we say, 'From men,' then we'll get in trouble with the people, for they all think that John the Baptist was a prophet."

So they had to say, "We do not know."

Then Jesus answered their question by saying, "Then I will not tell you by what authority I do these things." And he added a story:

"A man once planted a vineyard and fenced it in and hewed out a wine-vat and built a watch tower, and he leased it to tenants and left the neighborhood. At the proper time he sent a slave to the tenants to get from them a share of the vintage. And they took him and beat him and sent him back empty-handed. And again he sent another slave to them. And they beat him over the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another; and him they killed; . . . He still had one left to send, a dearly loved son. He sent him to them last of all, thinking, 'They will respect my son.'

But the tenants said to one another, 'This is his heir! Come on, let us kill him, and the property will belong to us!' So they took him and killed him, and threw his body outside of the vineyard. . . . Did you ever read this passage of Scripture:

" 'That stone which the builders rejected
Has become the cornerstone;
This came from the Lord
And seems marvelous to us.' "[1]

This story was almost the last straw. Jesus' questioners were simply furious, and almost speechless with rage. They wanted then and there to have him arrested and put to death as a blasphemer, but they saw that he had many sympathizers, and they were afraid. When they saw that they could get nowhere, they sent others to question him and trip him if possible.

One man asked him whether or not they should pay taxes to Caesar, and probably a little impatiently Jesus answered; "Certainly, pay your taxes. Give to Caesar what you owe him, and to God what you owe him."

Then one of the scribes who seemed to be quite impressed with Jesus' skill in answering questions, decided to ask one of his own, "What commandment is first of all?"

And Jesus answered: "The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt

[1] Mark 12. 1–11. Quoted by permission from the University of Chicago Press, Chicago. From *The New Testament*, An American Translation, by Dr. Edgar J. Goodspeed.

love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

"You have answered well, Teacher," said the scribe. "There is none other but God: and to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is much more than whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices."[2]

"You are not far from the kingdom of heaven," said Jesus, and after that no one dared ask any more questions.

In spite of the grave danger that he seemed to be in, Jesus never once weakened in his determination to purify the worship of God. He directed his attack upon the scribes and priests, for they were the religious leaders of that day. Fearlessly he stood up in the Temple and spoke these words:

"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and to have salutations in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts: they which devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers."

He condemned them for taking the joy out of religion, for holding to the letter and killing the spirit of the law, for trying to keep up outward appearances of righteousness when their lives were filled with unrighteousness, for straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. Blind leaders of the blind, he called them, and, worst of all, hypocrites.

And after this scathing denunciation of the religious leaders of his day, he broke down with a pathetic lament, one of the most beautiful of all his utterances: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that

[2] Mark 12. 28–34.

killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"[1]

How his heart must have ached, when he realized what was happening. He had many friends and followers who believed what he taught, but he was helpless before the power of the Temple officials. They feared anything or anyone that in any way threatened their position. And Jesus was dangerous. By his own words and actions he had inflamed the people and embarrassed the priests. He could make serious trouble for them, and we read in Matthew's story of Jesus' life these words: "Then were gathered together the chief priests, and the elders of the people, unto the court of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas; and they took council together that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill him. But they said, Not during the feast, lest a tumult arise among the people."

"Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said, What are ye willing to give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to deliver him unto them."[2]

[1] Matthew 23. 37.
[2] Matthew 26. 3–5, 14–16.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE GATHERING DARKNESS

"LET us eat our Passover meal together. Who knows? I may not be with you for long." When their Master spoke in that manner, his disciples were filled with terror. They could not face the future without their leader. How could they be happy and gay like the other pilgrims, when their hearts were heavy? But they could not disappoint their Lord, as they tried to enter into his plans for the meal.

Early that day Jesus sent two of his disciples out to make preparations. He wanted to keep his plans secret, so he selected his two most faithful followers, John and Peter, to find a room and buy the food for the meal. If he suspected Judas of being disloyal to him, he very likely told him nothing of his plans, so that the Temple police would not be notified of his whereabouts, and come to arrest him before the meal was over.

Toward evening John and Peter reported that all was in readiness for the supper, and they all went together to the room chosen. It was not the happy occasion that the Passover supper was supposed to be, for everyone in the group was filled with fear and suspense. They felt some uncanny influence in their midst; they knew that something was soon to happen, and at least eleven of the twelve disciples had already begun to feel a foreshadow of the awful

loneliness that would be theirs, if they should lose their leader.

As they ate, Jesus talked to them of what he feared would happen; that he would be destroyed, that they would have to carry on his work. In a beautiful symbol, he took up the cup of wine, blessed it, then said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves."

Then he took the bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and passed it to the others, and said, "This is my body, which is given for you: Eat this in remembrance of me." In the same manner he said concerning the cup of wine: "This is my blood. Drink you all of it."

When they had finished, Jesus got up from his mat on the floor, removed his cloak, took a basin and towel, and began to wash his disciples' feet. They protested, of course, and Peter grew almost violent when he said, "You shall never wash my feet."

Then seeing the look of disappointment in Jesus' eyes when Jesus said, "Then I know that you are not my friend," Peter added hastily, "Yes, Lord, wash not only my feet, but my hands and my head also."

When Jesus had finished he put on his outer garments and sat down again with his disciples. Then he asked: "Do you know what I have done? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and that is what I am to you, but I have given you an example of what you yourselves should do for one another. You also should wash one another's feet. A servant is not greater than his master, nor am I greater than He that has sent me to you. If you understand the

things that I have taught you, and the examples that I have given you, you shall be very happy if you do them."

He seemed to grow sad and distressed as he talked, and finally when he could keep it no longer he said, "There is someone at this very table who shall betray me and bring about my arrest." All the disciples looked up and from Jesus to each other. From every one came the question, "Lord, is it I?"

And not to answer too plainly Jesus said, "It is he for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it to him," and they all knew when he gave the sop to Judas, who it was that would betray their Leader.

The atmosphere seemed charged with some evil omen. They all wanted to get away from that room. and Judas was the first to go slinking away under the cloak of darkness, leaving Jesus and his eleven remaining disciples by themselves.

The end was near. Jesus knew that within a few hours he would be in the hands of his enemies. He feared not for himself, but for his followers, and especially for the work which they had begun. As they left the city they walked together toward their lodgings in Bethany and on the way talked over what might happen, now that Judas had betrayed their Lord. Peter was loud in his promises of faithfulness. "I am ready to go to prison and to death with thee, Lord." But Jesus, knowing how hard it would be for Peter to live up to that declaration, said, "Before the cock crows in the morning, Peter, you shall be disloyal to me three times."

As they drew near to the Mount of Olives they came to a garden called Gethsemane, meaning "Oil Press"—a place where Jesus often came to rest.

On this night of all nights he felt the need of strength to endure whatever the next few hours might have in store for him. He wanted to be alone, so he left eight of his disciples at the entrance of the garden, and took with him his closest friends, Peter, James, and John. Before they had gone far he left even these three companions and went on alone into the depths of the garden to pray.

"I am very sad," he told them, "and I am filled with distress. Stay here, and watch." And he left them.

That night Jesus poured out his very life for his world, as he threw himself on his face and prayed, "My Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass away from me." Meaning that if God so willed, he need not pass through the agony of the next few hours. "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." He prayed, we are told, till drops of sweat like blood stood on his forehead.

In the anguish of that hour he felt so painfully alone, so insufferably sad, so unbearably anxious for his work, as yet only begun. He thought of his disciples. He hoped that he might be able to depend on them, but when he came out of the shadows to the place where he had left Peter, James, and John, he found them—sleeping.

"What, could you not watch with me one little hour?" he said to Peter.

Again he prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink it, thy will be done." And again he found his disciples sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. They were tired.

Back to his knees went Jesus for the third time, and with a note of splendid surrender, he prayed,

"Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." And to his disciples he said when he found them still sleeping, "Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough; the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." And then he heard a rustle through the trees. "Get up, and let us be going."

Hardly had he spoken these words, when Judas came rushing into his presence with a large number following, armed with swords and staves, and Judas kissed Jesus. For he had arranged with his conspirators to identify Jesus for them by kissing him.

"Hail, Rabbi," he shouted as he kissed Jesus.

And Jesus said, calmly: "Friend, do that for which you have come." Then they descended on Jesus and took him out of the garden. "Have you come to seize me as though I were a robber? I will go with you. I spent every day teaching in the Temple, and you made no effort to take me then."

They led him away to the house of Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered.

CHAPTER XXX

THE TRAGEDY OF THE AGES

It was an angry court to which Jesus was taken, made up of men in high places—scribes and priests. They were smarting under the heartless rebukes that Jesus had given them in public. "Hypocrites! Generation of vipers! Whitened sepulchres! Blind leaders of the blind!"—these words still rang in their ears. They wanted revenge. They wanted to destroy this meddler, this reformer, before he caused them serious trouble.

From Jesus' manner had gone the fighting spirit he had shown that day in the Temple when he drove out the merchants and money-changers. His face was calm and serene, though it bore the marks of intense suffering and anguish. He was tired. He was thwarted. He was sick at heart. Where were his disciples? They had all fled—frightened and disheartened. He stood alone before an unfair court to be judged for what he knew to be the truth.

Men who could tell lies about him were brought in to testify against him. One man said, "I heard him say that he could destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days."

"Did you say that? Can you not defend yourself?" shouted the high priest, and Jesus remained perfectly silent.

Growing angrier than ever at Jesus, the high priest pressed him with further questions: "Tell us, are you the Christ, the Son of God?"

And Jesus answered: "That is what you have said."

That made the high priest furious. He stalked up and down and tore his clothes and beat the air with his hands, "What more proof do you need? You have heard this blasphemer with your own ears. What shall we do with him?"

They all rose to their feet shouting and waving their arms: "Put him to death. Put him to death." And they spat upon him and struck him and taunted him. When they were satisfied, they bound his hands and led him to Pilate, the governor, for, after all, they did not have the power to put Jesus to death, except as he would be turned over to them by Pilate.

By the time they came into the presence of Pilate the crowd had grown in numbers and fury. Many who had professed to be Jesus' friends only yesterday were now loudly clamoring for his destruction. They swarmed into Pilate's hall like wolves bent on their prey, but Pilate having nothing against Jesus, and wishing to be fair, at least went through the form of a trial.

"Are you the king of the Jews?" he asked Jesus.

"If you say so," answered Jesus.

Angry shouts from the mob became even more deafening at the way Jesus answered his questioner.

"Aren't you aware of all the things that you are accused of?" Pilate continued, and Jesus made no reply. Pilate hardly knew what to do. He disliked condemning Jesus, yet he feared the angry mob, so he took an easy way out. There was an old Jewish custom followed at the time of the Passover, which made it possible for the governor to

release one prisoner, so he temporized by asking, "Whom shall I set free—Barabbas (a notorious criminal), or Jesus?"

The chief priests and elders persuaded the people to ask for the release of Barabbas, so when the governor asked the question again, they all shouted as with one voice, "Barabbas."

"But what shall I do with Jesus?" asked Pilate, in great distress.

"Crucify him, crucify him," they all shouted. Pilate was helpless in the hands of that angry mob. and with a childish gesture he washed his hands in a basin before the whole crowd, and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man."

"His blood be on us!" they answered. "On us, and our children!"

After Pilate had flogged Jesus he turned him over to the soldiers to be crucified.

If Jesus found the taunts of the priests unbearable, what must he have thought of the way the soldiers treated him? They took off his clothes—those that had not already been torn off, and dressed him in a scarlet robe, probably the cast-off garment of some court attendant. One of them platted a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and another put a reed in his hand. Then they paraded back and forth in front of him, leering at him and mocking him, calling him ugly names and saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" They even forced the thorns down on his head, spat upon him, and struck him heavy blows. When they had thus vented their malice on him, they removed the scarlet robe, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him away to be crucified.

Now, the Jews had a law that executions could not take place within the city walls, so they led Jesus out through the gate—it might even have been the gate through which he had ridden in triumph a few days before!—to a skull-shaped hill, called Golgotha, meaning "the place of the skull." It was quite a long journey, and Jesus must have been almost exhausted after the strain of the night before. He stumbled under the weight of his cross, for one condemned to be crucified had to carry his own cross. The soldiers found a man in the crowd, Simon of Cyrene, and compelled him to carry Jesus' cross.

Great numbers of people made up the procession to Calvary, as Golgotha is known—heartless, cruel, blood-thirsty murderers. Not one of Jesus' disciples was with him, though we are told that Peter "followed afar off."

About nine o'clock in the morning Jesus was crucified between two thieves. The soldiers cast lots for his clothes and over his head they wrote this accusation: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." Even after they had nailed him to the cross they continued to taunt him and rail against him. They even wanted to give him vinegar mixed with gall to drink, but Jesus only said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Toward midafternoon under the scorching sun Jesus died, and by that time many women who had followed him from Galilee came to minister to him—Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of John and James. With the help of a rich man, named Joseph of Arimathæa, a friend of Jesus, they took him down

from the cross and prepared him for burial. Pilate had given them this permission. Jesus was laid away in the tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathæa, a ledge hollowed out of one of the rocky hills around Jerusalem.

"O dearly, dearly has he loved,
And we must love him too,
And trust in his redeeming love,
And try his works to do."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE ABIDING CHRIST

NINETEEN hundred years have rolled around since that morning when Jesus of Nazareth was crucified by Roman soldiers on a skull-shaped hill outside the gates of Jerusalem. At that time to all outward appearances his work had failed. His cause was lost. His disciples had fled. He was alone! But what of the years that lie between our day and that? To-day many millions love and worship him all over the world. His name is known in every land, in every tongue. And the church, founded in his memory, carries on his work of teaching, preaching, and serving.

When Jesus died his followers, at the very most, numbered only a few outcasts and peasants, with here and there a man of wealth and power who admired and followed from afar, fearing to be known as one of his disciples. But to-day Jesus' followers come from all classes of people, rich and poor, great and unknown, educated and uneducated. Men and women and children of all races and nations call him Lord and Master, and find in him their guide and companion.

Jesus' disciples couldn't believe that their leader was dead, that they would never see him again or hear his voice. They felt so lost and all alone without him. They hardly knew where to turn or what

to do. But after the first great shock of his death had begun to disappear, and they could think more clearly about the things that he had told them, they began, one by one, to understand that, after all, he was not dead. The more they thought about him, the more they realized that he lived, that he lived with them. They felt his presence as they talked over their plans for carrying on his work. In their journeys from town to town, wherever they were, even during their meals, he was with them. He seemed to be bringing them comfort and cheer, seemed to be guiding them back to Jerusalem so that they could take up his work where he had left it. Like a great command, his words rang out, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe [do or follow] all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway" (Matthew 28. 19–20).

All fear seemed to leave those strong followers of Jesus—there were only eleven now. They remembered that Jesus had told them not to be afraid of anyone who could kill the body, but to fear only those who could kill the spirit. So back to Jerusalem they came, filled with love for their Master, and courage for their work. And from Jerusalem they carried the story of Jesus to the neighboring towns and provinces, across the Mediterranean to Greece and Rome. As the years came and went, numbers were added until millions had heard the story of Jesus. To-day he lives in every nation and land, the world around. And the simple message of his life has helped to bring good will and happiness to all mankind.

Jesus At Work To-day

Wherever men and women and children are working together to build a happier and better world, they are led by the spirit of Jesus. He points the way of service, and we have but to follow in his footsteps if we would help in his work. Jesus taught his followers to pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done." Let us see whether or not they have made that prayer come true.

Jesus' followers share health.—How many hundreds of years has it taken for man to discover the laws of health—how to take care of eyes and ears, how to raise, prepare, and eat foods that are helpful; how to safeguard little children from blindness and disease, how to check the spread of epidemics, how to help everyone to learn and practice the laws of health. How thankful we are for doctors and nurses and dentists, for hospitals, clinics and Boards of Health whose duty it is to keep us well and strong! How proud we are of the men and women who have given their talents to share health with the world, that mankind everywhere may be kept in good health. They have helped greatly in the building of a better world.

Jesus' followers search for truth.—Among the builders of a better world must be mentioned those great explorers, the seekers for truth, who by their discoveries have freed the human race from the darkness of ignorance. Let us mention Darwin and Galileo and note especially those men of our time to whom the world owes an eternal debt of gratitude: Thomas Edison and his inventions that have brought comfort and freedom from drudgery to the home;

Luther Burbank, who has discovered rare beauty in nature, and transformed lemons into grapefruit, and wild roses into American Beauties; Marconi with his wireless, that has brought safety and certainty into what was hitherto more or less hazardous ocean travel; the Wright Brothers, builders of the first airships; and countless others in shops and laboratories, in schools and libraries are searchers for truth and sharers of the light with the rest of the world, in order that they may help to span the distance between the nations and close up the gaps in human knowledge.

Jesus' followers find beauty.—Let us remember also the poets and artists and composers who have given the world its beautiful poems, pictures, stories, and music. They have led the world to see God in beauty, and how much they have helped to share happiness!

Jesus' followers help their fellows.—And what of the number who have labored to bring peace and good will to God's family? Those who have helped to break down race pride and prejudice, to give the children of all races a chance to be the best that they could be, to spread love and to breed understanding sympathy among nations made unhappy by fear and by war. Whom shall we name in the list? Abraham Lincoln, Frances E. Willard, Wilfred T. Grenfell, David Livingstone, and hundreds of others. They have taken the place of Peter, James, and John, of Matthew, Nathanael, and the others. There is a place too for us in this great work of building a better world.

Jesus and You and I

We can't help but be thrilled when we realize what Jesus has done for our world, how he has inspired men and women everywhere to self-sacrificing service in behalf of their fellows, how his example has led to the discovery and spread of goodness, truth, and beauty, how he lives to-day in the lives of his followers. When Jesus lived on this earth he gave his life to help his fellows come to know God, he taught them ways of right living and pointed the way to complete happiness in the kingdom of God.

He lives to-day to help you and me discover the best that is in us, find out how to solve our problems and build our habits in the right way, learn how to live in a self-forgetting way in order that we too may do our part to help in the building of a better world. What can we do?

Our world is far from perfect. Sometimes we wonder whether it is even in a small way Christian. There are so many things in it that contradict the spirit and teachings of Jesus and hinder the Christian enterprise:

Hatred of one race for another.

War between the nations of the earth.

Grasping after money in a way that makes the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Disregard for law and order.

Child labor.

Famine and disease in many parts of the world.

How can Jesus help to remove these hindrances? When men and women and children catch the meaning of his life and try to live after his example. How would Jesus treat members of a different race?

Would he clamor for money and riches? Would he do anything to prevent children from being happy and healthy? Would he be indifferent to suffering anywhere on the face of the earth? What *would* Jesus do? How would he enter into the problems of our world, and try to meet them? He can enter into these problems and help us solve them if we cultivate within ourselves his spirit of self-sacrificing devotion to the welfare of other people, if we try to follow his example in all that we do and think and say. Jesus may live in us, and we may help him build the kingdom of God, if we give him a chance to use us in his world!

PRAYER

O God, our Father, we thank thee that Jesus lives, that he abides in this world of ours, that he may live in us. We thank thee for the example of his life, for the beautiful simplicity of his teachings, for the chance that we have to follow his example and to put his teachings into practice. We pray that we may let Jesus live in us, helping us with our problems, guiding us in all that we undertake, leading us into thy kingdom, where we may share with him and with our fellows the abundant life. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXII

TELLING OTHERS THE STORY OF JESUS

JESUS among his neighbors! Jesus loved people, he felt sorry for those in trouble, he was glad to help those in need. It was said of him that "he went about doing good." Throughout these weeks and months you have been given a chance to become acquainted with Jesus, the boy, the man, the teacher, the helper—the Neighbor. And from the stories and discussions you have learned ways to put Jesus' example into practice, so that you too might be a neighbor.

Telling others the story of Jesus.—It was many years after Jesus' death before anyone put in writing the story of his life. Those who knew Jesus best just told their friends and neighbors about the kind deeds that they had seen Jesus do, and they passed on from mouth to mouth the wonderful words that they had heard him say. Parents told these stories to their children and the children repeated them to their playmates. In this way the memory of Jesus' life was kept fresh and beautiful, even though the facts of his life were sometimes hidden.

The most interesting stories of Jesus were told by the twelve men who had known Jesus best by living with him and working with him during the years of his ministry. We can imagine that the people listened eagerly as they heard the thrilling stories of Jesus' busy life, and as they were told again and

again the words of hope and good cheer that Jesus spoke to his followers. Peter, one of the twelve, could probably tell the stories most accurately, for we are told that he kept a diary of everything that happened while he was with Jesus. This he gave to his nephew, John Mark, who was just a lad when Jesus was going through the cities and villages of Palestine teaching and preaching and helping.

John Mark's story.—How John Mark must have prized that diary! How happy we would be if we could do for Jesus and his cause what John Mark did! For he gave to the world the most accurate story of Jesus' life to be found anywhere. We find it in our Bible, the second book in the New Testament, and it is called *The Gospel According to Mark*, the word "Gospel" meaning "good news." It would be impossible for us to count the millions and millions of people all over the world who during the past nineteen hundred years have come to know and love and serve Jesus through the story of his life and works, as told by John Mark.

Others tell the same story.—Perhaps you are wondering how we came to have the other stories of Jesus' life in our Bible. For years learned men in Europe and America have been puzzling over this question. They have been able to discover almost identical material in at least three of the stories: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. But they have also discovered great differences at many important points. This is what they have decided: that the writers of Matthew and Luke based their Gospels on Mark's story and then told their own story in such a way as to give to their readers their own ideas of Jesus.

When you read the stories of Matthew, Mark, and Luke you will find that each writer has presented Jesus in a little different light from the others. The writer of Matthew appears to be a devout Jew, and he tells his story in such a way as to link Jesus up with Jewish tradition and ideals. Luke, on the other hand, has a very human approach to Jesus. He tells us an intimate story of Jesus in daily contact with human need and suffering. He adds a beautiful quality to Jesus that is not brought out so strongly by the others: that Jesus prayed. Because of this Luke's Gospel has sometimes been called "the praying Gospel." We find also that Luke tried to give a connected story of what happened in these early days, for he wrote the first twelve chapters of the book of Acts, describing the early days of the Christian Church. In Mark we have a much shorter book of stories told in a few simple words, that picture Jesus as the suffering servant who gave his life for his people.

Passing on the teachings of Jesus.—We are not sure who wrote the Gospel of Matthew, but we are sure that he loved Jesus deeply and wanted others to know about his life and teachings. For this writer adds something found only in a slight degree in Mark's story, the teachings of Jesus. These he procured from some unknown source and built them into his story of Jesus. Just think what the world would have lost if it had never known the Sermon on the Mount, as told in Matthew 5, 6, and 7, or if it had never found the beautiful lesson of service as given in Matthew 25. 34–40, closing with the words, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."

On the teachings of Jesus which the book of Matthew has given the world, are men and women to-day seeking to build a better world. What a wonderful service to God and to Jesus and to all mankind has been done by this humble Jew, whoever he was, that wrote the gospel of Matthew!

The story by an unknown writer.—There is still another story of Jesus' life—the Gospel according to John, and now called the fourth Gospel. It is given this name because so little is known about it. Scholars have been trying to find out who wrote it and when and where it was written. Because they are unwilling to answer definitely any of these questions, they have fallen into the habit of referring to it as the fourth Gospel. The story as told in this book differs widely from the story in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, adding some details that these three omit and omitting some that these three include. Rather than to present an accurate story of Jesus' life and work, this writer seeks to unfold the loving spirit of Jesus and to urge his readers to believe in him as the true Son of God. The beauty of his language and the tone of his message have helped many a follower of Jesus through the centuries to hold true to the way of righteousness and service.

The story that we shall tell.—We too have come to know Jesus! We came to know him as a boy learning at home and school the ways of right living. We admired him as a young man deciding to follow the way of service even though he had to sacrifice home ties and face hardships. We praised him as a Teacher and Helper of the people. We loved him as the Suffering Servant of mankind, who was willing to die in order that righteousness and justice and

brotherhood might prevail. We have a chance now to share in his work, to carry forward the plans that he made, to put into practice the example that he left, to follow him in the path of service in order that through us his work may go on. Ours is the task! Ours is the challenge! Let us become in all things and in all places true followers of Jesus, "who went about doing good!"

"O Jesus, Prince of Life and Truth,
Beneath thy banner bright,
We dedicate our strength and youth
To battle for the right;
We give our lives with glad intent
To serve the world and thee,
To live, to suffer and be spent,
To set our brothers free."

—*Anonymous.*

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Jesus among his neighbors

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